# THE PRIEST'S COMPANION

REV. B. F.
MARCETTEAU
S.S.

J. H. McMahon.

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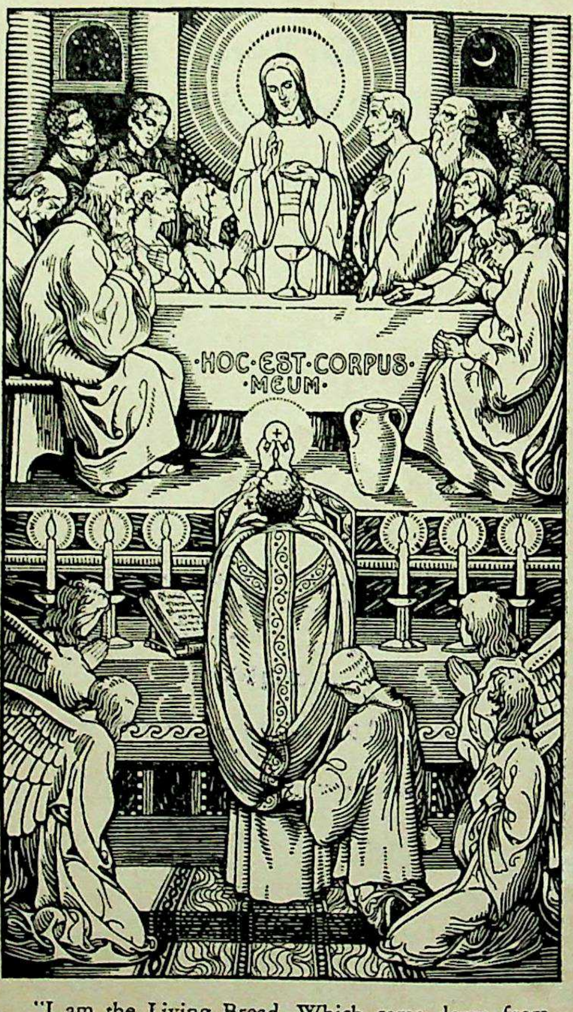
# COMPANION



·HOC·EST·CORPUS·
·MEUM·

"I am the Living Bread, Which came down from heaven" (*John vi. 51*).

# The Priest's
# COMPANION

## A Manual of Prayers, Devotions, Meditations and Self-Direction

BY

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**Office of the Archbishop**
1100 FRANKLIN STREET
**San Francisco, California**

January 16, 1932.

Father Marcetteau has given us in his little book a very practical ideal of our priestly life, while he has not failed to mark out the way of reaching this noble ideal. I commend most heartily to our priests this fine work of kindly help, and I can only hope that by using it they may realize in themselves the glory and the dignity of their high calling, and thus increase their fervor and their power for the glory of Christ and the salvation of souls, redeemed in Christ's precious blood.

Edward J. Hanna

*Archbishop of San Francisco.*

## PREFACE

Nothing great can be accomplished without the inspiration, incentive, and guidance of an ideal. Since the state and work of the Holy Priesthood are great above all others, and since their greatness must be upheld in the souls and in the hands of those who are the recipients of priestly character and power, God's ministers, if constantly guided and encouraged by the thought of their high dignity and sublime mission, will more easily and more fully meet the expectation of the Church who has selected, ordained, and appointed them, and of the souls who depend on their zeal, wisdom, and example for their eternal salvation.

The purpose of this manual is, therefore, to propose an ideal of the priestly life, not so high, however, as to be unattainable; the pursuit of this ideal, even if it does not lead to the summit of sacerdotal perfection, will undoubtedly prove beneficial to those who sincerely and generously strive towards it. A player may often miss the ball which passes above his head or flies by his side; yet, the effort he makes in trying to reach it, especially when frequently repeated, cannot fail to develop and strengthen his muscles, and to benefit his physical health. So shall the mind, heart, and will of a priest be refreshed and strengthened by repeated efforts towards the ideal of prayer, or virtue, of sacerdotal zeal and duty, even if he does not fully reach the goal at which he aims.

The *First Part* of this Manual contains a variety of prayers and devotions suited to the condition and needs of the Clergy.

A special set of prayers for each day in the week will, it is hoped, facilitate a worthy preparation for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and a fervent and fruitful thanksgiving. A choice of prayers, acts, liturgical hymns, anthems, and invocations will help to foster true and sound piety in accordance with the intentions and the spirit of the Church; it will also remind the priest, as a mediator between God and man, of his obligations towards the living and departed members of his flock.

To the prayers and acts selected for Visits to the Blessed Sacrament have been added short considerations on the Gospel, one for each day in the month, with the purpose of imparting variety to this devotion and making the presence of Our Lord in the tabernacle more concrete and definite to the minds of the worshipers.

The *Second Part* consists of sixty-two meditations. Some of these, by bringing us back to the first dawn of our priestly vocation, the years of our preparation, and the day of our Ordination, will help us to renew the grace which is in us through the imposition of the bishop's hands, to rekindle the fervor of days gone by, and to rub off the rust with which temporal cares, earthly views, or spiritual neglect have perhaps dulled the brightness of our early vision of the Holy Priesthood. The other meditations bear on natural, Christian, and sacerdotal virtues, on the sources of the spiritual life, and on the principal duties of a priest. The considerations, presented in a simple and direct manner, lead to acts of adoration, love, gratitude, and contrition, to self-examination, prayer, and practical resolutions, the form and expression of which are usually left to each one's personal initiative and preference.

The ideas and principles recalled or suggested here are familiar to all priests; they heard them mentioned or explained in the years of their seminary training, or learned them later from their own studies and readings, or gathered them from their personal experience in the sacred ministry; but these ideas and principles can bear more abundant fruits if remembered and considered before Our Lord in the tabernacle, in the pure and bracing atmosphere of prayer and meditation.

The *Third Part* proposes a Rule of Conduct embracing the various aspects of a priest's personal life and of his sacred duties; this Rule may prove especially helpful to the younger members of the Clergy when they first enter the field of their labor. Finally, practical suggestions are offered for the time of the Annual Retreat and the anniversary of an Ordination.

May this little volume contribute its share in helping the priests of our own day to keep ever present and bright in their minds the ideals of the Priesthood with its sublime dignity and noble duties! May it help them to realize, more and more clearly, how strictly bound they are to make Christ truly live in their hearts, and to manifest His spirit and grace in their actions, in order that, through their work and example, Christ's life may spring up and develop in the souls of those committed to their care! "*Veni ut vitam habeant, et abundantius habeant.*"

THE AUTHOR

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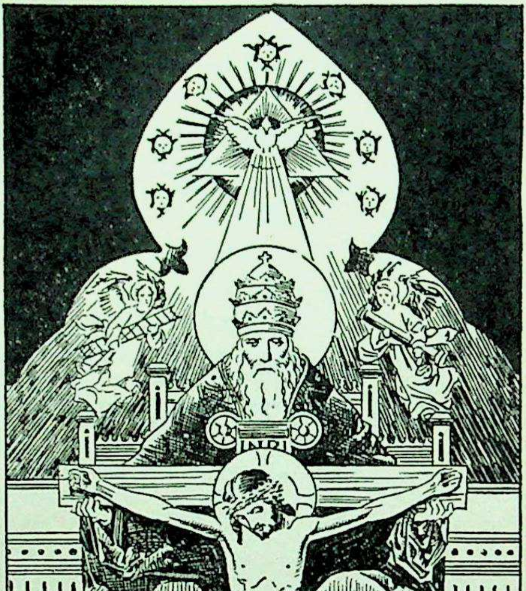
## *Part I*

# PRAYERS AND DEVOTIONS



"There are Three Who give testimony in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these Three are one" (*I John v.* 7).

## *Part I*

# PRAYERS AND DEVOTIONS

## RISING

As soon as you awake, make the Sign of the Cross, and say: "Here I am, (O Lord): for thou didst call me—*Ecce ego, (Domine): quia vocasti me.*" 1 Kings *iii. 6.* "Behold I come to do thy will, O God—*Ecce venio ut faciam, Deus, voluntatem tuam*" (Heb. x. 9).

## MORNING PRAYERS

In the name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Blessed be the holy and undivided Trinity, now and forever. Amen.

Most holy and adorable Trinity, one God in three Persons, I believe that Thou art here present; I adore Thee with the deepest humility, and render to Thee, with my whole heart, the homage which is due to Thy sovereign majesty.

O my God, I most humbly thank Thee for all the favors Thou hast bestowed upon me to the present moment. I give Thee thanks from the depth of my heart that Thou hast created me after Thine own image and likeness, that Thou hast redeemed me by the precious blood of Thy dear Son, and that Thou hast preserved me and brought me safe to the beginning of another day.

I offer to Thee, O Lord, my whole being, and in particular all my thoughts, words, actions and sufferings of this day. I consecrate them all to the glory of Thy name, beseeching Thee that through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Savior, they may all find acceptance in Thy sight. May Thy divine love animate them, and may they all tend to Thy greater glory.

ADORABLE Jesus, my Savior and Master, model of all perfection, I resolve and will endeavor, this day, to imitate Thy example, to be, like Thee, mild, humble, chaste, zealous, charitable and resigned. I will redouble my efforts that I may not fall, this day, into any of those sins which I have heretofore committed, *especially*——, and which I sincerely desire to forsake.

O MY GOD, Thou knowest my poverty and weakness, and that I am unable to do anything good without Thee; deny me not, O God, the help of Thy grace; proportion it to my necessities; give me strength to avoid everything which Thou forbiddest, and to practice the good which Thou hast commanded; and enable me to bear patiently all the trials which it may please Thee to send me.

*Our Father. Hail Mary.*

*Here may be added the Acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity.*

O HOLY VIRGIN, Mother of God, my Mother and Patroness, I place myself under thy protection; I throw myself with confidence into the arms of thy compassion. Be to me, O Mother of mercy, my refuge in distress, my consolation under suffering, my advocate with thy adorable Son, now and at the hour of my death. Amen.

O faithful Guardian and Father of Virgins, Blessed Joseph, to whom was confided the care of Jesus, and of Mary the Queen of Virgins, I most humbly supplicate thee, by the love thou dost bear Jesus and Mary, to obtain for me that, being preserved from every stain during my whole life, I may be ever able to serve them with unspotted purity of mind and body. Amen.

Angel of God, my guardian dear,
To whom His love commits me here,
Ever this day be at my side,
To light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

### AN ACT OF FAITH

O my God, I firmly believe that Thou art one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; I believe that Thy divine Son became man, and died for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because Thou hast revealed them, Who canst neither deceive nor be deceived.

### AN ACT OF HOPE

O my God, relying on Thy infinite goodness and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of Thy grace, and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer.

### AN ACT OF CHARITY

O my God, I love Thee above all things, with my whole heart and soul, because Thou art all good and worthy of all love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of Thee. I forgive all who have injured me, and ask pardon of all whom I have injured.

### DAILY INTENTIONS

O MY GOD! I offer Thee all my prayers, works and sufferings of this day, in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, for the following intentions:

*Sunday*—To obtain a true spirit of zeal, religion, and piety. For the success of priests' work, and the spiritual welfare of those intrusted to their care.

*Monday*—Spirit of meekness and humility. Souls in purgatory, and Religious Communities.

*Tuesday*—Spirit of Faith. Relatives, friends, and benefactors.

*Wednesday*—Spirit of Charity. The sick, dying, suffering, poor, and those who care for them.

*Thursday*—Love of the Holy Eucharist. Vocations to the Priesthood; conversion of pagans and heretics; needs of missionaries.

*Friday*—Spirit of mortification and self-sacrifice. Conversion of sinners.

*Saturday*—Love of chastity and of the Blessed Virgin. Schools and teachers; children and youth.

Add your own private intentions to those suggested above.

# EVENING PRAYERS

In the name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

O my God, I present myself before Thee at the end of another day, to offer Thee anew the homage of my heart. I humbly adore Thee, my Creator, my Redeemer, and my Judge! I believe in Thee, because Thou art Truth itself; I hope in Thee, because Thou art faithful to Thy promises; I love Thee with my whole heart, because Thou art infinitely worthy of being loved; and for Thy sake I love my neighbor as myself.

Enable me, O my God, to return Thee thanks as I ought for all Thy inestimable blessings and favors. Thou hast thought of me and loved me from all eternity; Thou hast formed me out of nothing; Thou hast delivered up Thy beloved Son to the ignominious death of the Cross for my redemption; Thou hast made me a member of Thy Holy Church; Thou hast preserved me from falling into the abyss of eternal misery, when my sins had provoked Thee to punish me; and Thou hast graciously continued to spare me, even though I have not ceased to offend Thee. What return, O my God, can I make for Thy innumerable blessings, and particularly for the favors of this day? O all ye saints and angels, unite with me in praising the God of mercy, who is so bountiful to so unworthy a creature.

*Our Father. Hail Mary.*

O my God, Sovereign Judge of men, who desirest not the death of a sinner, but that he should be converted and saved, enlighten my mind, that I may know the sins which I have this day committed in thought, word or deed, and give me the grace of true contrition.

*Here examine your conscience; then say:*

O MY GOD, I heartily repent, and I am grieved that I have offended Thee, because Thou art infinitely good, and sin is infinitely displeasing to Thee. I humbly ask of Thee mercy and pardon, through the infinite merits of Jesus Christ. I resolve, by the assistance of Thy grace, to do penance for my sins, and I will endeavor never more to offend Thee.

O GOD, hear my prayers on behalf of our Holy Father, Pope *N.*, our Bishop, our clergy, and for all that are in authority over us. Bless, I beseech Thee, the whole Catholic Church, and convert all heretics and unbelievers. Pour down Thy blessings, O Lord, upon all my friends, relations, and acquaintances, and upon my enemies, if I have any. Help the poor and sick, and those who are in their last agony. O God of mercy and goodness, have compassion on the souls of the faithful in purgatory; put an end to their sufferings, and grant to them eternal light, rest and happiness. Amen.

BLESS, O Lord, the repose I am about to take, that my bodily strength being renewed, I may be the better enabled to serve Thee. Amen.

O BLESSED Virgin Mary, Mother of mercy, pray for me that I may be preserved this night from all evil of body or soul. Blessed St. Joseph, and all ye saints and angels of Paradise, especially my guardian angel and my chosen patron, watch over me. I commend myself to your protection now and always. Amen.

*Here may be said one of the following Litanies.*

# LITANIES APPROVED BY THE CHURCH

## Litany of the Most Holy Name of Jesus

*On Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday*

| | |
|---|---|
| Kyrie, eleison. | Lord, have mercy on us. |
| Christe, eleison. | Christ, have mercy on us. |
| Kyrie, eleison. | Lord, have mercy on us. |
| Jesu, audi nos. | Jesus, hear us. |
| Jesu, exaudi nos. | Jesus, graciously hear us. |
| Pater de cœlis Deus,[1] | God the Father of heaven,[1] |
| Fili Redemptor mundi Deus. | God the Son, Redeemer of the world, |
| Spiritus Sancte Deus, | God the Holy Ghost, |
| Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus, | Holy Trinity, one God, |
| Jesu, Fili Dei vivi, | Jesus, Son of the living God, |
| Jesu, splendor Patris, | Jesus, splendor of the Father, |
| Jesu, candor lucis æternæ, | Jesus, brightness of eternal light, |
| Jesu, rex gloriæ, | Jesus, king of glory, |
| Jesu, sol justitiæ, | Jesus, sun of justice, |
| Jesu, fili Mariæ Virginis, | Jesus, son of Virgin Mary, |
| Jesu amabilis, | Jesus, most amiable, |
| Jesu admirabilis, | Jesus, most admirable, |
| Jesu, Deus fortis, | Jesus, mighty God, |
| Jesu, Pater futuri sæculi, | Jesus, father of the world to come, |
| Jesu, magni consilii angele, | Jesus, angel of the great counsel, |

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[1] Miserere nobis.

[1] Have mercy on us.

| | |
|---|---|
| Jesu potentissime,[1] | Jesus, most powerful,[1] |
| Jesu patientissime, | Jesus, most patient, |
| Jesu obedientissime, | Jesus, most obedient, |
| Jesu, mitis et humilis corde, | Jesus, meek and humble of heart, |
| Jesu, amator castitatis, | Jesus, lover of chastity, |
| Jesu, amator noster, | Jesus, lover of us, |
| Jesu, Deus pacis, | Jesus, God of peace, |
| Jesu, auctor vitæ, | Jesus, author of life, |
| Jesu, exemplar virtutum, | Jesus, model of virtues, |
| Jesu, zelator animarum, | Jesus, zealous for souls, |
| Jesu, Deus noster, | Jesus, our God, |
| Jesu, refugium nostrum, | Jesus, our refuge, |
| Jesu, Pater pauperum, | Jesus, father of the poor, |
| Jesu, thesaure fidelium, | Jesus, treasure of the faithful, |
| Jesu, bone pastor, | Jesus, good shepherd, |
| Jesu, lux vera, | Jesus, true light, |
| Jesu, sapientia æterna, | Jesus, eternal wisdom, |
| Jesu, bonitas infinita, | Jesus, infinite goodness, |
| Jesu, via et vita nostra, | Jesus, our way and our life, |
| Jesu, gaudium angelorum, | Jesus, joy of angels, |
| Jesu, rex patriarcharum, | Jesus, king of patriarchs, |
| Jesu, magister apostolorum, | Jesus, master of apostles, |
| Jesu, doctor evangelistarum, | Jesus, teacher of evangelists, |
| Jesu, fortitudo martyrum, | Jesus, strength of martyrs, |
| Jesu, lumen confessorum, | Jesus, light of confessors, |
| Jesu, puritas virginum, | Jesus, purity of virgins, |

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[1] Miserere nobis.

[1] Have mercy on us.

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|---|---|
| Jesu, corona sanctorum omnium,[1] | Jesus, crown of all saints,[1] |
| Propitius esto, parce nobis, Jesu. | Be merciful, spare us, O Jesus. |
| Propitius esto, exaudi nos, Jesu. | Be merciful, graciously hear us, O Jesus. |
| Ab omni malo,[2] | From all evil,[2] |
| Ab omni peccato, | From all sin, |
| Ab ira tua, | From Thy wrath, |
| Ab insidiis diaboli, | From the snares of the devil, |
| A spiritu fornicationis, | From the spirit of fornication, |
| A morte perpetua, | From everlasting death, |
| A neglectu inspirationum tuarum, | From the neglect of Thy inspirations, |
| Per mysterium sanctæ incarnationis tuæ, | Through the mystery of Thy holy incarnation, |
| Per nativitatem tuam, | Through Thy nativity, |
| Per infantiam tuam, | Through Thy infancy, |
| Per divinissimam vitam tuam, | Through Thy most divine life, |
| Per labores tuos, | Through Thy labors, |
| Per agoniam et Passionem tuam, | Through Thy agony and Passion, |
| Per crucem et derelictionem tuam, | Through Thy cross and dereliction, |
| Per languores tuos, | Through Thy sufferings, |
| Per mortem et sepulturam tuam, | Through Thy death and burial, |
| Per resurrectionem tuam, | Through thy resurrection, |
| Per ascensionem tuam, | Through Thy Ascension, |

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[1] Miserere nobis.

[2] Libera nos, Jesu.

[1] Have mercy on us.

[2] Jesus, deliver us.

Per sanctissimæ Eucharistiæ institutionem tuam,[1]
Per gaudia tua,
Per gloriam tuam,

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, parce nobis, Jesu.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, exaudi nos, Jesu.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis, Jesu.

Jesu, audi nos.
Jesu, exaudi nos.

### *Oremus*

Domine Jesu Christe, qui dixisti: Petite, et accipietis; quærite, et invenietis; pulsate, et aperietur vobis, quæsumus; da nobis petentibus divinissimi tui amoris affectum, ut te toto corde, ore et opere diligamus, et a tua nunquam laude cessemus.

Through Thy institution of the most holy Eucharist,[1]
Through Thy joys,
Through Thy glory,

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, spare us, O Jesus.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Jesus.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us, O Jesus.
Jesus, hear us.
Jesus, graciously hear us.

### *Let us pray*

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who hast said: Ask and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; grant, we beseech Thee, unto us who ask, the gift of Thy most divine love, that we may ever love Thee with all our hearts, and in all our

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[1] Libera nos, Jesu.

[1] Jesus deliver us.

Sancti Nominis tui, Domine, timorem pariter et amorem fac nos habere perpetuum, quia nunquam tua gubernatione destituis quos in soliditate tuæ dilectionis instituis. Qui vivis et regnas in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

words and actions, and never cease from showing forth Thy praise.

Make us, O Lord, to have a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy name; for Thou never failest to govern those whom Thou dost solidly establish in Thy love. Who livest and reignest through all eternity. Amen.

Indulgence of 300 days, once a day (Leo XIII., Jan. 16, 1886).

## LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

### *On Friday*

| | |
|---|---|
| Kyrie, eleison. | Lord, have mercy on us. |
| Christe, eleison. | Christ, have mercy on us. |
| Kyrie, eleison. | Lord, have mercy on us. |
| Christe, audi nos. | Christ, hear us. |
| Christe, exaudi nos. | Christ, graciously hear us. |
| Pater de cœlis Deus,[1] | God the Father of heaven,[1] |
| Fili Redemptor mundi Deus, | God the Son, Redeemer of the world, |
| Spiritus Sancte Deus, | God the Holy Ghost, |
| Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus, | Holy Trinity, one God, |
| Cor Jesu, Filii Patris æterni, | Heart of Jesus, Son of the eternal Father, |

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[1] Miserere nobis.

[1] Have mercy on us.

| | |
|---|---|
| Cor Jesu, in sinu Virginis Matris a Spiritu Sancto formatum,[1] | Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mother,[1] |
| Cor Jesu, Verbo Dei substantialiter unitum, | Heart of Jesus, substantially united to the Word of God, |
| Cor Jesu, majestatis infinitæ, | Heart of Jesus, of infinite majesty. |
| Cor Jesu, templum Dei sanctum, | Heart of Jesus, sacred temple of God, |
| Cor Jesu, tabernaculum Altissimi, | Heart of Jesus, tabernacle of the Most High, |
| Cor Jesu, domus Dei et porta cœli, | Heart of Jesus, house of God and gate of heaven, |
| Cor Jesu, fornax ardens caritatis, | Heart of Jesus, fiery furnace of charity, |
| Cor Jesu, justitiæ et amoris receptaculum, | Heart of Jesus, abode of righteous love, |
| Cor Jesu, bonitate et amore plenum, | Heart of Jesus, full of bounteous love, |
| Cor Jesu, virtutum omnium abyssus, | Heart of Jesus, abyss of all virtues, |
| Cor Jesu, omni laude dignissimum, | Heart of Jesus, most worthy of all praise, |
| Cor Jesu, rex et centrum omnium cordium, | Heart of Jesus, king and center of all hearts, |
| Cor Jesu, in quo sunt omnes thesauri sapientiæ et scientiæ, | Heart of Jesus, in Whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, |
| Cor Jesu, in quo habitat omnis plenitudo divinitatis, | Heart of Jesus, in Whom dwells the fulness of divinity, |

[1] Miserere nobis.

[1] Have mercy on us.

| | |
|---|---|
| Cor Jesu, in quo Pater sibi bene complacuit,[1] | Heart of Jesus, in Whom the Father was well pleased,[1] |
| Cor Jesu, de cuius plenitudine omnes nos accepimus, | Heart of Jesus, of Whose fulness we have all received, |
| Cor Jesu, desiderium collium æternorum, | Heart of Jesus, desire of the everlasting hills, |
| Cor Jesu, patiens et multæ misericordiæ, | Heart of Jesus, patient and most merciful, |
| Cor Jesu, dives in omnes qui invocant te, | Heart of Jesus, enriching all who invoke thee, |
| Cor Jesu, fons vitæ et sanctitatis, | Heart of Jesus, fountain of life and holiness, |
| Cor Jesu, propitiatio pro peccatis nostris, | Heart of Jesus, propitiation for our sins, |
| Cor Jesu, saturatum opprobriis, | Heart of Jesus, glutted with contempt, |
| Cor Jesu, attritum propter scelera nostra, | Heart of Jesus, bruised for our offences, |
| Cor Jesu, usque ad mortem obediens factum, | Heart of Jesus, obedient unto death, |
| Cor Jesu, lancea perforatum, | Heart of Jesus, pierced with a lance, |
| Cor Jesu, fons totius consolationis, | Heart of Jesus, source of all consolation, |
| Cor Jesu, vita et resurrectio nostra, | Heart of Jesus, our life and resurrection, |
| Cor Jesu, pax et reconciliatio nostra, | Heart of Jesus, our peace and reconciliation, |
| Cor Jesu, victima peccatorum, | Heart of Jesus, victim for sin, |

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[1] Miserere nobis.

[1] Have mercy on us.

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|---|---|
| Cor Jesu, salus in te sperantium,[1] | Heart of Jesus, salvation of those who trust in Thee,[1] |
| Cor Jesu, spes in te morientium, | Heart of Jesus, hope of those who die in Thee, |
| Cor Jesu, deliciæ sanctorum omnium, | Heart of Jesus, delight of all the saints, |
| Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, parce nobis, Domine. | Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord. |
| Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, exaudi nos, Domine. | Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord. |
| Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. | Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. |
| *V.* Jesu mitis et humilis corde. | *V.* Jesus meek and humble of heart. |
| *R.* Fac cor nostrum secundum Cor tuum. | *R.* Make our hearts like unto Thine. |
| *Oremus* | *Let us pray* |
| Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, respice in Cor dilectissimi Filii tui, et in laudes et satisfactiones, quas in nomine peccatorum tibi persolvit, iisque misericordiam tuam petentibus, tu veniam | Almighty and eternal God, consider the Heart of Thy dearly beloved Son and the praise and satisfaction which He offers Thee on behalf of sinners and, being appeased, grant pardon to those who |

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[1] Miserere nobis.

[1] Have mercy on us.

concede placatus, in nomine eiusdem Filii tui Jesu Christi, qui tecum vivit et regnat in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

seek Thy mercy, in the name of the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee through all eternity. Amen.

Indulgence of 300 days, once a day (S. Rit. C., reg. Apr. 2, 1899).

## LITANY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

### *On Monday, Wednesday, Saturday.*

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|---|---|
| Kyrie, eleison. | Lord, have mercy on us. |
| Christe, eleison. | Christ, have mercy on us. |
| Kyrie, eleison. | Lord, have mercy on us. |
| Christe, audi nos. | Christ, hear us. |
| Christe, exaudi nos. | Christ, graciously hear us. |
| Pater de cœlis Deus,[1] | God the Father of heaven,[1] |
| Fili Redemptor mundi Deus, | God the Son, Redeemer of the world, |
| Spiritus Sancte Deus, | God the Holy Ghost, |
| Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus, | Holy Trinity, one God, |
| Sancta Maria,[2] | Holy Mary,[2] |
| Sancta Dei genitrix, | Holy Mother of God, |
| Sancta virgo virginum, | Holy Virgin of virgins, |
| Mater Christi, | Mother of Christ, |
| Mater divinæ gratiæ, | Mother of divine grace, |
| Mater purissima, | Mother most pure, |
| Mater castissima, | Mother most chaste, |
| Mater inviolata, | Mother inviolate, |
| Mater intemerata, | Mother undefiled, |

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[1] Miserere nobis.

[2] Ora pro nobis.

[1] Have mercy on us.

[2] Pray for us.

| | |
|---|---|
| Mater amabilis,[1] | Mother most amiable,[1] |
| Mater admirabilis, | Mother most admirable, |
| Mater boni consilii, | Mother of good counsel, |
| Mater Creatoris, | Mother of our Creator, |
| Mater Salvatoris, | Mother of our Redeemer, |
| Virgo prudentissima, | Virgin most prudent, |
| Virgo veneranda, | Virgin most venerable, |
| Virgo prædicanda, | Virgin most renowned, |
| Virgo potens, | Virgin most powerful, |
| Virgo clemens, | Virgin most merciful, |
| Virgo fidelis, | Virgin most faithful, |
| Speculum justitiæ, | Mirror of justice, |
| Sedes sapientiæ, | Seat of wisdom, |
| Causa nostræ lætitiæ, | Cause of our joy, |
| Vas spirituale, | Spiritual vessel, |
| Vas honorabile, | Vessel of honor, |
| Vas insigne devotionis, | Singular vessel of devotion, |
| Rosa mystica, | Mystical Rose, |
| Turris Davidica, | Tower of David, |
| Turris eburnea, | Tower of ivory, |
| Domus aurea, | House of gold, |
| Fœderis arca, | Ark of the covenant, |
| Janua cœli, | Gate of heaven, |
| Stella matutina, | Morning star, |
| Salus infirmorum, | Health of the sick, |
| Refugium peccatorum, | Refuge of sinners, |
| Consolatrix afflictorum, | Comforter of the afflicted, |
| Auxilium Christianorum, | Help of Christians, |
| Regina angelorum, | Queen of angels, |
| Regina patriarcharum, | Queen of patriarchs, |
| Regina prophetarum, | Queen of prophets, |
| Regina apostolorum, | Queen of apostles, |

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[1] Ora pro nobis.

[1] Pray for us.

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|---|---|
| Regina martyrum,[1] | Queen of martyrs,[1] |
| Regina confessorum, | Queen of confessors, |
| Regina virginum, | Queen of virgins, |
| Regina sanctorum omnium, | Queen of all saints, |
| Regina sine labe originali concepta, | Queen conceived without original sin, |
| Regina sacratissimi rosarii, | Queen of the most holy Rosary, |
| Regina pacis, | Queen of peace, |
| Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, parce nobis, Domine. | Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord. |
| Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, exaudi nos, Domine. | Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord. |
| Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. | Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. |
| *V.* Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei Genitrix. | *V.* Pray for us, O holy Mother of God. |
| *R.* Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi. | *R.* That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. |
| *Oremus* | *Let us pray* |
| Concede nos famulos tuos, quæsumus, Domine Deus, perpetua mentis et corporis sanitate gaudere; et, gloriosa beatæ Mariæ sem- | Grant us, Thy servants, we beseech Thee, O Lord God, to enjoy continual health of soul and body; and by the glorious inter- |

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[1] Ora pro nobis.

[1] Pray for us.

per Virginis intercessione, a præsenti liberari tristitia, et æterna perfrui lætitia. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

cession of Blessed Mary, ever a virgin, to be delivered from present sorrow, and to attain everlasting joy. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Indulgence of 300 days every time (Pius VII, Sept. 30, 1817).

## LITANY OF ST. JOSEPH

| | |
|---|---|
| Kyrie, eleison. | Lord, have mercy on us. |
| Christe, eleison. | Christ, have mercy on us. |
| Kyrie, eleison. | Lord, have mercy on us. |
| Christe, audi nos. | Christ, hear us. |
| Christe, exaudi nos. | Christ, graciously hear us. |
| Pater de cœlis Deus,[1] | God the Father of heaven,[1] |
| Fili Redemptor mundi, Deus, | God the Son, Redeemer of the world, |
| Spiritus sancte Deus, | God the Holy Ghost, |
| Sancta Trinitas unus Deus, | Holy Trinity, one God, |
| Sancta Maria,[2] | Holy Mary,[2] |
| Sancte Joseph, | Holy Joseph, |
| Proles David inclyta, | Son of David, worthy of renown, |
| Lumen Patriarcharum, | Light of the patriarchs, |
| Dei Genitricis sponse, | Spouse of the Mother of God, |
| Custos pudice Virginis, | Chaste guardian of the Blessed Virgin, |
| Filii Dei nutritie, | Foster-father of the Son of God, |

[1] Miserere nobis.

[2] Ora pro nobis.

[1] Have mercy on us.

[2] Pray for us.

| | |
|---|---|
| Christi defensor sedule,[1] | Watchful defender of Christ,[1] |
| Almæ Familiæ præses, | Head of the Holy Family, |
| Joseph justissime | Joseph most just, |
| Joseph castissime, | Joseph most chaste, |
| Joseph prudentissime, | Joseph most prudent, |
| Joseph fortissime, | Joseph most courageous, |
| Joseph obedientissime, | Joseph most obedient, |
| Joseph fidelissime, | Joseph most faithful, |
| Speculum patientiæ, | Mirror of patience, |
| Amator paupertatis, | Lover of poverty, |
| Exemplar opificum, | Model of workers, |
| Domesticæ vitæ decus, | Glory to domestic life, |
| Custos virginum, | Safeguard of virgins, |
| Familiarum columen, | Strength of family ties, |
| Solatium miserorum, | Solace of the afflicted, |
| Spes ægrotantium, | Hope of the sick, |
| Patrone morientium, | Patron of the dying, |
| Terror dæmonum, | Terror of the demons, |
| Protector sanctæ Ecclesiæ, | Protector of Holy Church, |
| Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, parce nobis Domine. | Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord. |
| Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, exaudi nos Domine. | Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord. |
| Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. | Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. |

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[1] Ora pro nobis.

[1] Pray for us.

*V.* Constituit eum dominum domus suæ.

*R.* Et principem omnis possessionis suæ.

*Oremus*

Deus, qui ineffabili providentia beatum Joseph sanctissimæ Genitricis tuæ sponsum eligere dignatus es; præsta quæsumus, ut quem protectorem veneramur in terris, intercessorem habere mereamur in cœlis: qui vivis et regnas in sæcula sæculorum. *R.* Amen.

*V.* He made him Master of His house.

*R.* With charge over all that He possessed.

*Let us pray*

O God, Who, with wisdom and love unutterable, didst choose blessed Joseph to be the spouse of Thy most holy Mother; grant, we beseech Thee, that we may be deemed worthy to have him for our intercessor in heaven whom on earth we venerate as our protector; Who livest and reignest through all eternity. Amen.

**Indulgence of 300 days, once a day (C. S. Rit., Mar. 18, 1909; reg. Mar. 19, 1909).**

# THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

## *Preparation and Thanksgiving for Every Day in the Week*

## *SUNDAY*

### PREPARATION

### DECLARATIO INTENTIONIS

Ego volo celebrare Missam et conficere corpus et sanguinem Domini nostri Jesu Christi, juxta ritum sanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ, ad laudem omnipotentis Dei totiusque Curiæ triumphantis, ad utilitatem meam totiusque Curiæ militantis, pro omnibus qui se commendaverunt orationibus meis in genere et in specie, et pro felici statu sanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ. Amen.

Gaudium cum pace, emendationem vitæ, spatium veræ pœnitentiæ, gratiam et consolationem Sancti Spiritus, perseverantiam in bonis operibus, tribuat nobis omnipotens et misericors Dominus. Amen.

Indulgentia 50 dierum.

### ORATIO AD SANCTUM CUJUS EO DIE MISSA DICITUR

O Sancte *N.*, ecce ego miser peccator, de tuis meritis confisus, offero nunc sacratissimum sacramentum corporis et sanguinis Domini nostri Jesu Christi pro tuo honore et gloria. Precor te humiliter et devote, ut pro me hodie intercedere digneris, ut tantum sacrificium digne et acceptabiliter offerre valeam, et eum tecum et cum omnibus electis ejus æternaliter laudare, atque cum eo regnare valeam: Qui vivit et regnat in sæcula sæculorum.

Indulgentia 100 dierum.

### THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST

As I willingly offered Myself to God My Father, for thy sins, with My hands stretched out upon the Cross, and My body naked, so that nothing remained in Me which was not turned into a sacrifice, to appease the divine wrath: even so must thou willingly offer thyself to Me daily in the Mass, for a pure and holy oblation, together with all thy powers and affections, as heartily as thou art able. What do I require more of thee than that thou endeavor to resign thyself entirely to Me? Whatsoever thou givest besides thyself I regard not; for I seek not thy gift, but thyself.

Offer thyself to Me, and give thy whole self for God, and thy offering will be accepted. But if thou wilt stand upon thy own self, and wilt not offer thyself freely to My will, thy offering is not perfect, nor will there be an entire union between us. (*The Following of Christ*. Bk. iv, ch. viii; 1, 2.)

### ORATIO S. AMBROSII EPISCOPI

Summe Sacerdos, et vere Pontifex Jesu Christe, qui te obtulisti Deo Patri hostiam puram et immaculatam in ara crucis pro nobis miseris et peccatoribus, et qui dedisti nobis carnem tuam ad manducandum, et sanguinem tuum ad bibendum, et posuisti mysterium istud in virtute Spiritus sancti tui, dicens: Hæc quotiescumque feceritis, in mei memoriam facietis: rogo per eumdem sanguinem tuum, magnum salutis nostræ pretium, rogo per hanc miram et ineffabilem caritatem, qua nos miseros et indignos sic amare dignatus es, ut lavares nos a peccatis nostris in sanguine tuo: doce me servum tuum indignum, quem inter cetera dona tua etiam ad officium sacerdotale vocare

dignatus es, nullis meis meritis, sed sola dignatione misericordiæ tuæ: doce me, quæso, per Spiritum sanctum tuum, tantum tractare mysterium ea reverentia et honore, ea devotione et timore, quibus oportet et decet. Fac me per gratiam tuam semper illud de tanto mysterio credere et intelligere, sentire et firmiter tenere, dicere et cogitare, quod tibi placet, et expedit animæ meæ. Intret spiritus tuus bonus in cor meum, qui sonet ibi sine sono, et sine strepitu verborum loquatur omnem veritatem. Profunda quippe sunt nimis, et sacro tecta velamine. Propter magnam clementiam tuam concede mihi Missarum solemnia mundo corde et pura mente celebrare. Libera cor meum ab immundis et nefandis, vanis et noxiis cogitationibus. Muni me beatorum Angelorum pia et fida custodia, ac tutela fortissima, ut hostes omnium bonorum confusi discedant. Per virtutem tanti mysterii, et per manum sancti Angeli tui repelle a me, et a cunctis servis tuis durissimum spiritum superbiæ et cenodoxiæ, invidiæ et blasphemiæ, fornicationis et immunditiæ, dubietatis et diffidentiæ. Confundantur qui nos persequuntur: pereant illi qui nos perdere festinant.

## PSALMUS 83

*Antiphona.* Ne reminiscaris Domine delicta nostra, vel parentum nostrorum: neque vindictam sumas de peccatis nostris.

QUAM dilecta tabernacula tua Domine virtutum: concupiscit, et deficit anima mea in atria Domini.

Cor meum, et caro mea exsultaverunt in Deum vivum.

Etenim passer invenit sibi domum: et turtur nidum sibi, ubi ponat pullos suos.

Altaria tua Domine virtutum: Rex meus, et Deus meus.

Beati, qui habitant in domo tua Domine: in sæcula sæculorum laudabunt te.

Beatus vir, cujus est auxilium abs te: ascensiones in corde suo disposuit, in valle lacrymarum in loco, quem posuit.

Etenim benedictionem dabit legislator, ibunt de virtute in virtutem: videbitur Deus deorum in Sion.

Domine Deus virtutum exaudi orationem meam: auribus percipe Deus Jacob.

Protector noster aspice Deus: et respice in faciem Christi tui:

Quia melior est dies una in atriis tuis super millia.

Elegi abjectus esse in domo Dei mei: magis quam habitare in tabernaculis peccatorum.

Quia misericordiam, et veritatem diligit Deus: gratiam, et gloriam dabit Dominus.

Non privabit bonis eos, qui ambulant in innocentia: Domine virtutum, beatus homo, qui sperat in te.

Gloria Patri, *etc.*

## THANKSGIVING

*Antiphona.* Trium puerorum cantemus hymnum, quem cantabant sancti in camino ignis, benedicentes Dominum. (*Temp. Pasch.* Alleluia). *Quæ Antiphona in Duplicibus tantum duplicatur.*

### CANTICUM TRIUM PUERORUM

BENEDICITE, omnia opera Domini, Domino: laudate et superexaltate eum in sæcula.

Benedicite, Angeli Domini, Domino: benedicite, cæli, Domino.

Benecite, aquæ omnes quæ super cælos sunt, Domino: benedicite, omnes virtutes Domini, Domino.

Benedicite, sol et luna, Domino: benedicite, stellæ cæli, Domino.

Benedicite, omnis imber et ros, Domino: benedicite, omnes spiritus Dei, Domino.

Benedicite, ignis et æstus, Domino: benedicite, frigus et æstus, Domino.

Benedicite, rores et pruina, Domino: benedicite, gelu et frigus, Domino.

Benedicite, glacies et nives, Domino: benedicite, noctes et dies, Domino.

Benedicite, lux et tenebræ, Domino: benedicite, fulgura et nubes, Domino.

Benedicat terra Dominum: laudet et superexaltet eum in sæcula.

Benedicite, montes et colles, Domino: benedicite, universa germinantia in terra, Domino.

Benedicite, fontes, Domino: benedicite, maria et flumina, Domino.

Benedicite, cete, et omnia, quæ moventur in aquis, Domino: benedicite, omnes volucres cæli, Domino.

Benedicite, omnes bestiæ et pecora, Domino: benedicite, filii hominum, Domino.

Benedicat Isræl Dominum: laudet et superexaltet eum in sæcula.

Benedicite, sacerdotes Domini, Domino: benedicite, servi Domini, Domino.

Benedicite, spiritus et animæ justorum, Domino: benedicite, sancti, et humiles corde, Domino.

Benedicite, Anania, Azaria, Misaël Domino: laudate et superexaltate eum in sæcula.

Benedicamus Patrem et Filium cum Sancto Spiritu: laudemus et superexaltemus eum in sæcula.

Benedictus es, Domine, in firmamento cæli: et laudabilis, et gloriosus, et superexaltatus in sæcula.

### PSALMUS 150

Laudate Dominum in sanctis ejus: laudate eum in firmamento virtutis ejus.

Laudate eum in virtutibus ejus: laudate eum secundum multitudinem magnitudinis ejus.

Laudate eum in sono tubæ: laudate eum in psalterio et cithara.

Laudate eum in tympano, et choro: laudate eum in chordis, et organo.

Laudate eum in cymbalis benesonantibus: laudate eum in cymbalis jubilationis: omnis spiritus laudet Dominum.

*Gloria Patri.*

*Antiphona.* Trium puerorum cantemus hymnum, quem cantabant sancti in camino ignis, benedicentes Dominum. (*Temp. Pasch.* Alleluia.)

Kyrie, eleison. Christe, eleison. Kyrie, eleison.

*Pater noster.*

*V.* Et ne nos inducas in tentationem. *R.* Sed libera nos a malo.

*V.* Confiteantur tibi, Domine, omnia opera tua. *R.* Et sancti tui benedicant tibi.

*V.* Exsultabunt sancti in gloria. *R.* Lætabuntur in cubilibus suis.

*V.* Non nobis, Domine, non nobis. *R.* Sed nomini tuo da gloriam.

*V.* Domine, exaudi orationem meam. *R.* Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

*V.* Dominus vobiscum. *R.* Et cum spiritu tuo.

*Oremus*

Deus, qui tribus pueris mitigasti flammas ignium: concede propitius; ut nos famulos tuos non exurat flamma vitiorum.

Actiones nostras, quæsumus, Domine, aspirando præveni, et adjuvando prosequere: ut cuncta nostra oratio et operatio a te semper incipiat, et per te cœpta finiatur.

Da nobis, quæsumus, Domine, vitiorum nostrorum flammas exstinguere, qui beato Laurentio tribuisti tormentorum suorum incendia superare. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. *R.* Amen.

*Pange lingua gloriosi,* page 79.

### PRAYER OF ST. THOMAS

I GIVE thanks to thee, O Lord most holy, Father almighty, God everlasting, for that from no merit of mine, but only because Thy mercy has no limit, Thou hast been pleased to appease my soul's hunger with the precious Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord.

Humbly I beg of Thee that this Holy Communion may not be counted to me for my judgment and condemnation, but rather as a saving prayer for pardon. Let it be unto me as the armor of faith, and as the shield of Thy love. May it from my heart root out all vice; may it utterly subdue my evil passions and all my unruly desires: May it in me give increase to charity and to patience, to humility and to submissiveness and to every other virtue. May it be my sure defence against the snares laid for me by my enemies visible and invisible. May it be the quiet ordering of my impulses, fleshly and spiritual. May it make me ever to cleave to Thee who art the one and true God;

and to it may I owe of my life a happy ending. And do Thou, O heavenly Father, vouchsafe one day to call me, the sinner, to that ineffable banquet, in which Thou, together with Thy Son and the Holy Ghost, art to Thy saints their true light, the fulfilling of their every desire, their everlasting gladness, their treasure beyond price and their utter happiness. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

### PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH

Listen, in Thy clemency, we beseech Thee, O Lord, to the prayers of Thy Church: do Thou bring to naught all the assaults of her enemies; put an end to all false teaching; and enable her to serve Thee in freedom and in safety.

O Mary, queen of apostles, beseech thy Son, the Lord of the harvest, to send laborers into His harvest, and to spare His people. Amen.

### PRAYER FOR PASTORS AND THEIR FLOCKS

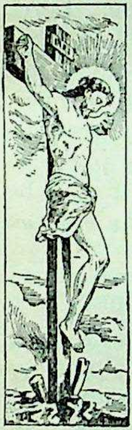
Almighty and everlasting God, who alone dost great wonders, send down upon Thy servants and the flocks intrusted to them, the spirit of Thy saving grace; and that they may please Thee in truth, pour forth upon them the continual flow of Thy blessings. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

O dearest Jesus! look down with love on Thy priests; fill them with burning zeal for the conversion of sinners; keep unstained their anointed hands which daily touch Thy immaculate Body; keep unsullied their lips purpled with Thy precious Blood; keep pure and unearthly a heart sealed with the sublime marks of Thy glorious priesthood; bless their labors with abundant fruit, and may those to whom they have ministered on earth, be one day their joy and consolation in Heaven. Amen.

### EN EGO

En ego, o bone et dulcissime Jesu, ante conspectum tuum genibus me provolvo, ac maximo animi ardore te oro atque obtestor, ut meum in cor vividos fidei, spei et caritatis sensus, atque veram peccatorum meorum pœnitentiam, eaque emendandi firmissimam voluntatem velis imprimere, dum magno animi affectu et dolore tua quinque vulnera mecum ipse considero, ac mente contemplor, illud præ oculis habens, quod jam in ore tuo ponebat David propheta de te, o bone Jesu: *Foderunt manus meas et pedes meos; dinumeraverunt omnia ossa mea* (Ps. xxi. 17, 18).



Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory, for the intentions of the Pope.

A plenary indulgence, applicable to the souls in purgatory, may be gained by the faithful who, after having confessed their sins with sorrow and received Holy Communion, shall devoutly recite this prayer before an image or picture of Christ crucified, and shall pray for the intentions of the Holy Father (Pius IX, July 31, 1858).

# *MONDAY*

## PREPARATION

*Ego volo celebrare Missam*, page 21.
*O Sancte N.*, page 21.

### THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST

LORD, all things are Thine that are in heaven and on earth. I desire to offer myself to Thee as a voluntary oblation, and to remain forever Thine. Lord, in the sincerity of my heart I offer myself to Thee this day to be thy servant evermore, to obey Thee, and to become a sacrifice of perpetual praise to Thee. Receive me with this sacred oblation of Thy precious Body, which I offer to Thee this day, in the presence of Thy angels invisibly standing by, that it may be for mine and all the people's salvation. (*The Following of Christ*. Bk. iv, ch. ix, 1.)

### ACTUS FIDEI, SPEI, CARITATIS ET CONTRITIONIS

CREDO in te, Domine Jesu Christe, quia tu es summa Veritas, qui dixisti: *Caro mea vere est cibus, et sanguis meus vere est potus.* Spero in te, O Misericordia infinita, quia tu bonus erga nos promisisti: *Si quis manducaverit ex hoc pane, vivet in æternum.* Amo te, O Bonitas æterna, super omnia, caritate quæ *diffusa est in cordibus nostris per Spiritum Sanctum qui datus est nobis;* et ideo doleo ex toto corde de peccatis commissis, eaque detestor cum proposito non peccandi de cætero. *Cor contritum et humiliatum, Deus, non despicies.*

### ORATIO S. AMBROSII

REX virginum, et amator castitatis et integritatis, cœlesti rore benedictionis tuæ exstingue in corpore

meo fomitem ardentis libidinis: ut maneat in me tenor castitatis corporis et animæ. Mortifica in membris meis carnis stimulos omnesque libidinosas commotiones, et da mihi veram, et perpetuam castitatem, cum ceteris donis tuis, quæ tibi placent in veritate: ut sacrificium laudis casto corpore, et mundo corde valeam tibi offerre. Quanta enim cordis contritione, et lacrymarum fonte, quanta reverentia et tremore, quanta corporis castitate, et animæ puritate istud divinum, et cœleste sacrificium est celebrandum, ubi caro tua in veritate sumitur, ubi sanguis tuus in veritate bibitur, ubi ima summis, terrena divinis junguntur, ubi adest sanctorum Angelorum præsentia, ubi tu es Sacrificium, et Sacerdos mirabiliter, et ineffabiliter constitutus!

### PSALMUS 84

BENEDIXISTI Domine terram tuam: avertisti captivitatem Jacob.

Remisisti iniquitatem plebis tuæ: operuisti omnia peccata eorum.

Mitigasti omnem iram tuam: avertisti ab ira indignationis tuæ.

Converte nos Deus salutaris noster: et averte iram tuam a nobis.

Numquid in æternum irasceris nobis? aut extendes iram tuam a generatione in generationem?

Deus tu conversus vivificabis nos: et plebs tua lætabitur in te.

Ostende nobis Domine misericordiam tuam: et salutare tuum da nobis.

Audiam quid loquatur in me Dominus Deus: quoniam loquetur pacem in plebem suam.

Et super sanctos suos: et in eos, qui convertuntur ad cor.

Verumtamen prope timentes eum salutare ipsius: ut inhabitet gloria in terra nostra.

Misericordia, et veritas obviaverunt sibi: justitia, et pax osculatæ sunt.

Veritas de terra orta est: et justitia de cœlo prospexit.

Etenim Dominus dabit benignitatem: et terra nostra dabit fructum suum.

Justitia ante eum ambulabit: et ponet in via gressus suos.

Gloria Patri, *etc.*

### THANKSGIVING

*Benedicite*, page 24.
*Adoro Te*, page 76.

### PRAYER OF ST. BONAVENTURE

PIERCE, O most sweet Lord Jesus, my inmost soul with the most joyous and healthful wound of Thy love, and with true, calm and most holy apostolic charity, that my soul may ever languish and melt with entire love and longing for Thee, may yearn for Thee and for Thy courts, may long to be dissolved and to be with Thee. Grant that my soul may hunger after Thee, the Bread of Angels, the refreshment of holy souls, our daily and supersubstantial bread, having all sweetness and savor and every delightful taste. May my heart ever hunger after and feed upon Thee, Whom the angels desire to look upon, and may my inmost soul be filled with the sweetness of Thy savor; may it ever thirst for Thee, the fountain of life, the fountain of wisdom and knowledge, the fountain of eternal light, the torrent of pleasure, the fulness of the house of God; may it ever compass Thee, seek

Thee, find Thee, run to Thee, come up to Thee, meditate on Thee, speak of Thee, and do all for the praise and glory of Thy name, with humility and discretion, with love and delight, with ease and affection, with perseverance to the end; and be Thou alone ever my hope, my entire confidence, my riches, my delight, my pleasure, my joy, my rest and tranquillity, my peace, my sweetness, my food, my refreshment, my refuge, my help, my wisdom, my portion, my possession, my treasure; in Whom may my mind and my heart be ever fixed and firm and rooted immovably. Amen.

## DE PROFUNDIS

De profundis clamavi ad te, Domine: Domine, exaudi vocem meam.

Fiant aures tuæ intendentes, in vocem deprecationis meæ.

Si iniquitates observaveris, Domine: Domine, quis sustinebit?

Quia apud te propitiatio est: et propter legem tuam sustinui te, Domine.

Sustinuit anima mea in verbo ejus: speravit anima mea in Domino.

A custodia matutina usque ad noctem: speret Israël in Domino.

Quia apud Dominum misericordia: et copiosa apud eum redemptio.

Et ipse redimet Israel, ex omnibus iniquitatibus ejus.

*V.* Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine. *R.* Et lux perpetua luceat eis.

*Oremus*

Fidelium, Deus, omnium Conditor et Redemptor: animabus famulorum, famularumque tuarum remis-

sionem cunctorum tribue peccatorum; ut indulgentiam, quam semper optaverunt, piis supplicationibus consequantur.

Deus, veniæ largitor, et humanæ salutis amator; quæsumus clementiam tuam; ut nostræ congregationis fratres, propinquos et benefactores, qui ex hoc sæculo transierunt, beata Maria semper Virgine intercedente cum omnibus sanctis tuis, ad perpetuæ beatitudinis consortium pervenire concedas.

Deus, qui inter apostolicos sacerdotes, famulum tuum *N.* (famulos tuos *N.* et *N.*) sacerdotali fecisti dignitate vigere: præsta, quæsumus, ut eorum quoque perpetuo aggregetur (aggregentur) consortio. Per Dominum nostrum.

Deus, qui nos patrem et matrem honorare præcepisti: miserere clementer animabus patris et matris meæ (*vel* animæ patris, *vel* matris) eorumque (ejusque) peccata dimitte; meque eos (eum *vel* eam) in æternæ claritatis gaudio fac videre. Per Dominum nostrum.

## PRAYER FOR A HAPPY DEATH

O MY LORD and Savior, support me in my last hour in the strong arms of Thy Sacraments and by the fresh fragrance of Thy consolations. Let the absolving words be said over me, and the holy oil sign and seal me; and let Thine own Body be my food, and Thy Blood my sprinkling; and let my sweet Mother, Mary, breathe on me, and my Angel whisper peace to me, and my glorious saints and my own dear patrons smile upon me, that, in them all and through them all, I may receive the gift of perseverance, and die as I desire to live, in Thy faith, in Thy Church, in Thy service, and in Thy love. Amen.—CARDINAL NEWMAN.

### AN ACT OF RESIGNATION TO DEATH

O LORD, my God, from this day I accept from Thy hand willingly and with submission, the kind of death that it may please Thee to send me, with all its sorrows, pains and anguish.

(A Plenary Indulgence, at the hour of death, for those who, on any day they may choose, will receive the Sacrament of Penance and Holy Communion, make this act for the love of God, visit a church and pray for the intentions of the Holy Father.)

### PRAYER TO THE INFANT JESUS

O DIVINE Infant Jesus, brought by Thy love to the lowliness of childhood, to the poverty and humiliation of the manger, I love Thee, I adore Thee. Purify me as Thou didst purify the shepherds and wise men, that I also may be docile to Thy word; let me share in the merits of Thy holy childhood, by filling me with Thy gentleness and humility. Amen.

O Lord Jesus, who didst vouchsafe so to annihilate the greatness of Thy incarnate divinity and most sacred humanity, as to be born in time, and become a little child: grant that we may acknowledge infinite wisdom in the silence of a child, power in weakness, majesty in abasement, so that adoring Thy humiliations on earth, we may contemplate Thy glory in heaven. Amen.

*En Ego*, page 29.

## *TUESDAY*

### PREPARATION

*Ego volo*, page 21.
*O Sancte* N., page 21.

### THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST

LORD, I offer to Thee all my sins and offences, which I have committed in Thy sight and that of Thy holy angels, from the day that I was first capable of sin until this hour, upon Thy propitiatory altar, that Thou mayest burn and consume them all with the fire of Thy charity, and remove all the stains of my sins, and cleanse my conscience from all offences and restore to me Thy grace, which I have lost by sin.

All my sins displease me exceedingly, I will never commit them any more; I am willing to do penance for them, and to make satisfaction to the utmost of my power. Behold I commit myself to Thy mercy; I resign myself into Thy hands. Deal with me according to Thy goodness, not according to my wickedness and iniquity. (*The Following of Christ*. Bk. iv, ch. ix, 2, 3.)

### ORATIO AD OMNES ANGELOS ET SANCTOS

ANGELI, Archangeli, Throni, Dominationes, Principatus, Potestates, Virtutes cœlorum, Cherubim atque Seraphim, omnes Sancti et Sanctæ Dei, præsertim Patroni mei, intercedere dignemini pro me, ut hoc sacrificium Deo omnipotenti digne valeam offerre ad laudem et gloriam nominis sui, et ad utilitatem meam totiusque Ecclesiæ suæ sanctæ. Amen.

### ORATIO S. AMBROSII

QUIS digne hoc celebrare poterit, nisi tu, Deus omnipotens, offerentem feceris dignum? Scio, Domine, et

vere scio, et idipsum pietati tuæ confiteor, quia non sum dignus accedere ad tantum mysterium, propter nimia peccata mea, et infinitas negligentias meas. Sed scio, et veraciter ex toto corde meo credo, et ore confiteor, quia tu potes me facere dignum, qui solus potes facere mundum de immundo conceptum semine, et de peccatoribus justos, et sanctos. Per hanc omnipotentiam tuam te rogo, Deus meus, ut concedas mihi peccatori hoc sacrificium celebrare cum timore et tremore, cum cordis puritate, et lacrymarum fonte, cum lætitia spiritali et cœlesti gaudio. Sentiat mens mea dulcedinem beatissimæ præsentiæ tuæ et excubias sanctorum Angelorum tuorum in circuitu meo.

## PSALMUS 85

INCLINA Domine aurem tuam, et exaudi me: Quoniam inops, et pauper sum ego.

Custodi animam meam, quoniam sanctus sum: salvum fac servum tuum, Deus meus, sperantem in te.

Miserere mei Domine, quoniam ad te clamavi tota die: lætifica animam servi tui, quoniam ad te Domine animam meam levavi.

Quoniam tu Domine suavis, et mitis: et multæ misericordiæ omnibus invocantibus te.

Auribus percipe Domine orationem meam: et intende voci deprecationis meæ.

In die tribulationis meæ clamavi ad te: quia exaudisti me.

Non est similis tui in diis Domine: et non est secundum opera tua.

Omnes Gentes quascumque fecisti, venient, et adorabunt coram te Domine: et glorificabunt nomen tuum.

Quoniam magnus es tu, et faciens mirabilia: tu es Deus solus.

Deduc me Domine in via tua, et ingrediar in veritate tua: lætetur cor meum ut timeat nomen tuum.

Confitebor tibi Domine Deus meus in toto corde meo, et glorificabo nomen tuum in æternum:

Quia misericordia tua magna est super me: et eruisti animam meam ex inferno inferiori.

Deus, iniqui insurrexerunt super me, et synagoga potentium quæsierunt animam meam: et non proposuerunt te in conspectu suo.

Et tu Domine Deus miserator et misericors, patiens, et multæ misericordiæ, et verax,

Respice in me, et miserere mei: da imperium tuum puero tuo: et salvum fac filium ancillæ tuæ.

Fac mecum signum in bonum, ut videant qui oderunt me, et confundantur: quoniam tu Domine adjuvisti me, et consolatus es me.

Gloria Patri, *etc.*

## THANKSGIVING

*Benedicite*, page 24.
*Jesu dulcis memoria,* page 87.

## ANIMA CHRISTI

ANIMA Christi, sanctifica me. Corpus Christi, salva me. Sanguis Christi, inebria me. Aqua lateris Christi, lava me. Passio Christi, conforta me. O bone Jesu, exaudi me. Intra tua vulnera absconde me. Ne permittas me separari a te. Ab hoste maligno defende me. In hora mortis meæ voca me. Et jube me venire ad te, ut cum Sanctis tuis laudem te in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

**Indulgentia 7 annorum semel in die, si sacerdos hanc orationem recitet post Missam; 300 dierum toties quoties.**

## PRAYER TO ST. JOHN THE APOSTLE

O GLORIOUS Apostle who, on account of thy virginal purity, wast so beloved by Jesus as to deserve to lay thy head upon His divine breast, and to be left, in His place, as son to His most holy Mother; I beg thee to inflame me with a most ardent love towards Jesus and Mary. Obtain for me from Our Lord that I, too, with a heart purified from earthly affections, may be made worthy to be ever united to Jesus as a faithful disciple, and to Mary as a devoted son, both here on earth and eternally in heaven. Amen.

Indulgence of 200 days, once a day.

## PRAYER FOR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

O GOD, who hast poured the gift of charity, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, into the hearts of the faithful, grant to thy servants for whom we implore Thy mercy, health of mind and body; that loving Thee with all their heart, they may accomplish those things that are pleasing to Thee. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Prayer to St. John Vianney*, page 73.

*Prayer to St. Francis of Sales*, page 73.

*En ego*, page 29.

# WEDNESDAY

## PREPARATION

*Ego volo,* page 21.
*O Sancte* N., page 21.

### THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST

I OFFER to Thee all the good I have, though very little and imperfect; that Thou mayest make it better and sanctify it; that Thou mayest be pleased with it, and make it acceptable to Thee, and perfect it more and more; and mayest moreover bring me, who am a slothful, unprofitable, and miserable man, to a good and happy end. (*The Following of Christ*, Bk. iv, ch ix, 4.)

### ORATIO AD S. JOSEPH

O FELICEM virum, beatum Joseph, cui datum est Deum, quem multi reges voluerunt vidère, et non viderunt, audire, et non audierunt, non solum videre et audire, sed portare, deosculari, vestire et custodire!

*V.* Ora pro nobis, beate Joseph. *R.* Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi.

### *Oremus*

DEUS, qui dedisti nobis regale sacerdotium: præsta, quæsumus; ut, sicut beatus Joseph unigenitum Filium tuum, natum ex Maria Virgine, suis manibus reverenter tractare meruit et portare, ita nos facias cum cordis munditia et operis innocentia tuis sanctis altaribus deservire, ut sacrosanctum Filii tui Corpus et Sanguinem hodie digne sumamus, et in futuro sæculo præmium habere mereamur æternum. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

**(Indulgentia 100 dierum semel in die.)**

### ORATIO S. AMBROSII

Ego enim Domine, memor venerandæ passionis tuæ accedo ad altare tuum, licet peccator, ut offeram tibi sacrificium, quod tu instituisti, et offerri præcepisti in commemorationem tui, pro salute nostra. Suscipe illud, quæso, summe Deus, pro Ecclesia sancta tua, et pro populo, quem acquisisti sanguine tuo. Et quoniam me peccatorem inter te, et eumdem populum tuum medium esse voluisti, licet in me aliquod boni operis testimonium non agnoscas, officium saltem dispensationis creditæ non recuses: nec per me indignum eorum salutis pereat pretium, pro quibus victima salutaris dignatus es esse et redemptio. Profero etiam Domine, (si digneris propitius intueri,) tribulationes plebium, pericula populorum, captivorum gemitus, miserias orphanorum, necessitates peregrinorum, inopiam debilium, desperationes languentium, defectus senum, suspiria juvenum, vota virginum, lamenta viduarum.

### PSALMUS 115

Credidi, propter quod locutus sum: ego autem humiliatus sum nimis.

Ego dixi in excessu meo: Omnis homo mendax.

Quid retribuam Domino, pro omnibus, quæ retribuit mihi?

Calicem salutaris accipiam: et nomen Domini invocabo.

Vota mea Domino reddam coram omni populo ejus: pretiosa in conspectu Domini mors sanctorum ejus:

O Domine quia ego servus tuus: ego servus tuus, et filius ancillæ tuæ.

Dirupisti vincula mea: tibi sacrificabo hostiam laudis, et nomen Domini invocabo.

Vota mea Domino reddam in conspectu omnis populi ejus: in atriis domus Domini, in medio tui Jerusalem.
Gloria Patri, *etc.*

### THANKSGIVING

*Benedicite*, page 24.
*Verbum supernum*, page 78.

### PRAYER FOR THE DYING

O MOST merciful Jesus, lover of souls, I pray Thee, by the agony of Thy most Sacred Heart, and by the sorrows of Thy Immaculate Mother, cleanse in Thine own Blood the sinners of the whole world who are now in their agony and who are to die this day. Amen.
Heart of Jesus, once in agony, pity the dying.

### PRAYER FOR THE SICK

O GOD of the heavenly Virtues, Who from the bodies of men drivest forth all sickness and all infirmity by the power of Thy word: draw graciously nigh unto Thy servants (Thy servant *N.*), that with weakness put to flight, and health and strength continually renewed, they (he *or* she) may ever bless Thy Holy Name. Amen.

### PRAYER FOR THE TEMPTED AND AFFLICTED

O GOD, Who dost make just the ungodly, and willest not the death of a sinner: we humbly entreat Thy majesty to protect Thy servants, who trust in Thy mercy, with Thy heavenly assistance, and preserve them by Thy continual protection: that they may constantly serve Thee, and by no temptation be separated from Thee. Amen.

### PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH FOR A HAPPY DEATH

O Blessed Joseph, who didst die in the arms of Jesus and Mary, obtain for me, I beseech thee, the grace of a happy death. In that hour of dread and anguish, assist me by thy presence, and protect me by thy power against the enemies of my salvation. Into your sacred hands, living and dying, Jesus, Mary, Joseph, I commend my soul. Amen.

### "SUSCIPE"

Take, O Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding and my whole will. Thou hast given me all that I am and all that I possess: I surrender it all to Thee that Thou mayest dispose of it according to Thy will. Give me only Thy love and Thy grace; with these I will be rich enough, and will have no more to desire.—St Ignatius.

Indulgence of 300 days once a day (Leo XIII, May 26, 1883).

*Prayer to St. Vincent de Paul,* page 73.
*En ego,* page 29.

## *THURSDAY*

### PREPARATION

*Ego volo*, page 21.
*O Sancte* N., page 21.

### THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST

I OFFER to Thee all the godly desires of Thy devout servants, the necessities of my parents, friends, brethren, sisters, and of all those that are dear to me; and of all such as, for the love of Thee, have been benefactors to me or others; or who have desired and begged of me to offer up prayers and Masses for themselves and all that belonged to them; whether they live as yet in the flesh, or whether they are now departed out of this world. (*The Following of Christ*, Bk. iv, ch. ix, 5.)

### EX ORATIONE CLEMENTIS PAPÆ XI

CREDO, Domine, sed credam firmius. Spero, Domine, sed sperem securius. Amo, Domine, sed amem ardentius. Doleo, Domine, sed doleam vehementius.

Adoro te, ut primum principium; desidero, ut finem ultimum; laudo, ut benefactorem perpetuum; invoco, ut defensorem propitium.

Offero tibi, Deus, cogitanda ut sint ad te; dicenda ut sint de te; facienda ut sint secundum te; ferenda, ut sint propter te.

Oro, Domine, intellectum illumines, voluntatem inflammes, corpus emundes, animam sanctifices.

Fac, Domine, ut sim in oratione attentus, in munere sedulus, in proposito firmus.

Da mortem præveniam, judicium pertimeam, infernum effugiam, paradisum obtineam. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

### ORATIO S. AMBROSII

Tu enim misereris omnium Domine: et nihil odisti eorum quæ fecisti. Memorare quæ sit nostra substantia: quia tu Pater noster es, quia tu Deus noster es, ne irascaris satis, neque multitudinem viscerum tuorum super nos contineas. Non enim in justificationibus nostris prosternimus preces ante faciem tuam, sed in miserationibus tuis multis. Aufer a nobis iniquitates nostras: et ignem sancti Spiritus in nobis clementer accende. Aufer cor lapideum de carne nostra; et da nobis cor carneum, quod te amet, te diligat, te delectetur, te sequatur, te perfruatur. Oramus Domine clementiam tuam, ut sereno vultu familiam tuam, sacri tui nominis officia præstolantem, aspicere digneris: et ut nullius sit irritum votum, nullis vacua postulatio, tu nobis preces suggere, quas ipse propitius audire, et exaudire delecteris.

### THANKSGIVING

*Benedicite*, page 24.
*Sacris Solemniis,* page 81.

### PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE HEATHEN

O Eternal God, Creator of all things, remember that the souls of the heathen are the work of Thy hands, and that Thou didst create them to Thine own likeness. Remember that Jesus Christ Thy Son suffered a most cruel death for their salvation. Permit no longer that He should be despised by the heathen. Be appeased by the prayers of the Church, Thy holy Spouse, and be mindful of Thy mercy. Forget, O Lord, their infidelity, and bring them to acknowledge as God, Jesus Christ Thy Son, whom thou hast sent into the world, who is our salvation, our life and resur-

rection, by whom we have been delivered from hell, and to whom be glory forever. Amen.

### PRAYER FOR MISSIONARIES

O Almighty God, Lord of the harvest of souls, we pray Thee to guide and bless all those who have gone forth to preach the Gospel of salvation in distant lands. Pour out Thy Holy Spirit upon them to strengthen their weakness, to comfort them in their trials, to direct them in all their efforts, and open the hearts of the heathen to receive the message delivered by them. Give unto them the spirit of power and love, and of sound mind, that in all their work they may set forth Thy glory and move forward the salvation of souls, that the heathen may become Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the world Thy possession, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### PRAYER FOR APOSTOLIC VOCATIONS

O God, who wouldst have all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth, send forth, we beseech Thee, laborers into the harvest; and grant them, with all boldness to preach the word, that Thy Gospel may everywhere be heard and glorified, and that all nations may know Thee, the one true God, and Him whom Thou hast sent, Jesus Christ Thy Son our Lord. Amen.

### ACT OF REPARATION TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Jesus, my God, my Savior, with that humble homage with which faith inspires me, I adore Thee true God and true Man. With my whole heart I love Thee, Who art present in the most august Sacrament of the altar. I now make reparation for all the irreverences, profanations and sacrileges which have been committed against Thee, for my own negligence and indifference towards Thee. I adore Thee, my God, in union with the saints and angels of heaven. I adore Thee, not only for those Catholics who neglect or offend Thee, but also for all heretics, schismatics and idolaters. O my Jesus, may all men know, adore, love and praise Thee, every moment, in this most holy and most divine Sacrament! Amen.

*En ego,* page 29.

# *FRIDAY*

## PREPARATION

*Ego volo*, page 21.
*O Sancte* N., page 21.

### THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST

I OFFER up to Thee my prayers and this sacrifice of propitiation for those in particular who have in anything wronged, grieved, or abused me, or have done me any damage or displeasure. And for all those likewise whom I have at any time grieved, troubled, injured, or scandalized, by word or deed, knowingly or unknowingly; that it may please Thee to forgive us all our sins and offences one against another. Take, O Lord, from our hearts all jealousy, indignation, wrath, and contention, and whatsoever may hurt charity, and lessen brotherly love. (*The Following of Christ*, Bk. iv, ch. ix, 6.)

### STABAT MATER

Sancta Mater, istud agas,
Crucifixi fige plagas
Cordi meo valide.

Juxta crucem tecum stare
Et me tibi sociare
In planctu desidero

Fac me tecum pie flere,
Crucifixo condolere
Donec ego vixero.

Fac ut portem Christi mortem,
Passionis fac consortem,
Et plagas recolere.

### BREVIS ORATIO

AURES tuæ pietatis, mitissime Deus, inclina precibus nostris, et gratia Sancti Spiritus illumina cor nostrum: ut tuis mysteriis digne ministrare, téque

aeterna caritate diligere mereamur. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

### ORATIO S. AMBROSII

Rogamus etiam te, Domine sancte Pater, et pro spiritibus fidelium defunctorum: ut sit illis salus, sanitas, gaudium, et refrigerium, hoc magnum pietatis sacramentum. Domine Deus meus, sit illis hodie magnum, et plenum convivium de te pane vivo, qui de cœlo descendisti, et das vitam mundo, de tua carne sancta, et benedicta, Agni videlicet immaculati, qui tollis peccata mundi, quæ de sancto et glorioso beatæ Virginis Mariæ utero est assumpta, et de Spiritu sancto concepta, ac de illo pietatis fonte, qui per lanceam militis ex tuo sacratissimo latere emanavit, ut exinde refecti, et satiati, refrigerati, et consolati, exsultent in laude, et gloria tua. Peto clementiam tuam Domine, ut descendat super panem tibi sacrificandum plenitudo tuæ benedictionis, et sanctificatio tuæ divinitatis. Descendat etiam Domine illa sancti Spiritus tui invisibilis, incomprehensibilisque majestas, sicut quondam in Patrum hostias descendebat, qui et oblationes nostras corpus et sanguinem tuum efficiat, et me indignum sacerdotem doceat tantum tractare mysterium cum cordis puritate, et lacrymarum devotione, cum reverentia, et tremore, ita ut placide, ac benigne suscipias sacrificium de manibus meis ad salutem omnium, tam vivorum, quam defunctorum.

### THANKSGIVING

*Benedicite*, page 24.
*Jesu decus angelicum*, page 89.

### A PRAYER TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

How boundless, O Jesus, is Thy love! Thou hast

prepared for me, of Thy most precious Body and Blood, a divine banquet, wherein Thou dost give Thyself to me without reserve. What has urged Thee to this excess of love? Nothing but Thine own most loving Heart. O adorable Heart of Jesus, furnace of divine love, receive my soul into the wounds of Thy most sacred Passion, that in this school of charity I may learn to make a return of love to that God who has given me such wonderful proofs of His love. Amen.

Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto Thine!

**Indulgence of 300 days.**

O Heart of Jesus, burning with love of me, inflame my heart with love of Thee!

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, mayest Thou be known, loved, and adored throughout all the world!

O Heart of my Redeemer, may the love of Thy friends make amends for all the injuries and neglects which Thou dost suffer!

### PRAYER TO JESUS CRUCIFIED

O Lord Jesus, by that bitterness which Thou didst suffer for me on the Cross, chiefly when Thy blessed Soul was being separated from Thy Body, have mercy on my soul, now and at its departure from this world, that it may be admitted to life eternal. Amen.

### PRAYER FOR THE CONVERSION OF SINNERS

O God, Who dost reject none that come unto Thee, but in loving kindness art appeased by the repentance even of the greatest sinners; mercifully regard our humble prayers and enlighten our hearts, that we may be able to fulfill Thy commandments. Amen.

### PRAYER FOR THE CONVERSION OF HERETICS

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who savest all and willest not that anyone should perish, look on the souls that are led astray by the deceit of the devil; that the hearts of those that err may be converted and return to the unity of Thy truth. Amen.

### ORATIO S. FRANCISCI XAVERII

O DEUS, ego amo te; nec amo te ut salves me, aut quia non amantes te æterno punis igne. Tu, mi Jesu, dulcissime totum me amplexus es in cruce. Tulisti clavos, lanceam, multamque ignominiam, innumeros dolores, sudores et angores, ac mortem; et hæc propter me ac pro me peccatore; cur igitur non amem te, O Jesu amantissime? non ut in cœlo salves me, aut ne in æternum damnes me, nec præmii ullius spe, sed sicut tu amasti me, sic amo et amabo te, solum quia Rex meus es, et solum quia Deus es. Amen.

*Litany of the Sacred Heart*, page 11.
*En ego,* page 29.

# *SATURDAY*

## PREPARATION

*Ego volo*, page 21.
*O Sancte* N., page 21.

### THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST

A PRIEST clad in his sacred vestments is Christ's vicegerent, to pray to God for himself, and for all the people, in a suppliant and humble manner. He has before him and behind him the sign of the Cross of the Lord that he may always remember the Passion of Christ. He bears the Cross before him on his vestment that he may diligently behold the footsteps of Christ, and fervently endeavor to follow them. He is marked with the cross behind that he may mildly suffer, for God's sake, whatsoever adversities shall befall him from others. He wears the cross before him that he may bewail his own sins; behind him, that through compassion he may lament the sins of others, and know that he is placed, as it were, a mediator between God and the sinner.

When a priest celebrates, he honors God, he rejoices the angels, he edifies the Church, he helps the living, he obtains rest for the dead, and makes himself partaker of all that is good. (*The Following of Christ*, Bk. iv, ch. v, 3.)

### ORATIO AD B. MARIAM VIRGINEM

O MATER pietatis et misericordiæ, beatissima Virgo Maria, ego miser et indignus peccator ad te confugio toto corde et affectu, et precor pietatem tuam: ut, sicut dulcissimo Filio tuo in cruce pendenti astitisti, ita et mihi misero peccatori, et sacerdotibus omnibus hic et in tota sancta Ecclesia hodie offerentibus, cle-

menter assistere digneris, ut tua gratia adjuti, dignam et acceptabilem hostiam in conspectu summæ et individuæ Trinitatis offerre valeamus. Amen.

Solve vincla reis,
Profer lumen cæcis,
Mala nostra pelle,
Bona cuncta posce.

Monstra te esse matrem,
Sumat per te preces,
Qui pro nobis natus,
Tulit esse tuus.

### ORATIO S. THOMÆ AQUINATIS

Deus, qui de indignis dignos facis, et de peccatoribus justos, et de immundis mundos, munda cor et corpus meum ab omni contagione et sorde peccati, et fac me dignum atque strenuum sanctis altaribus tuis ministrum: concede propitius, ut in hoc altari, ad quod indignus accedo, hostias acceptabiles atque placabiles offeram pietati tuæ pro peccatis et offensionibus, innumerisque et quotidianis excessibus meis, atque cunctorum simul Christianorum culpis abluendis, et per eum sit tibi votum meum acceptabile, qui se tibi Deo Patri pro nobis obtulit sacrificium. Qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus sancti Deus: per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

### THANKSGIVING

*Benedicite*, page 24.
*Lauda Sion Salvatorem*, page 83.

### AVE VERUM

Ave Verum Corpus, natum
Ex Maria virgine!
Vere passum, immolatum,
In cruce pro homine!
Cujus latus perforatum

Vero fluxit sanguine;
Esto nobis prægustatum,
  Mortis in examine.
O clemens, O pie!
O dulcis Jesu, Fili Mariæ!

### O QUAM SUAVIS EST

O QUAM suavis est, Domine, Spiritus tuus! qui, ut dulcedinem tuam in filios demonstrares, pane suavissimo de coelo præstito esurientes reples bonis, fastidiosos divites dimittens inanes.

### O SACRUM CONVIVIUM

O SACRUM convivium, in quo Christus sumitur: recolitur memoria passionis ejus: mens impletur gratia, et futuræ gloriæ nobis pignus datur.

### O JESU VIVENS IN MARIA

O JESU vivens in Maria, veni et vive in famulis tuis, in spiritu sanctitatis tuæ, in plenitudine virtutis tuæ, in perfectione viarum tuarum, in veritate virtutum tuarum, in communione mysteriorum tuorum; dominare omni adversæ potestati, in spiritu tuo ad gloriam Patris. Amen.

**Indulgentia 300 dierum, semel in die.**

### MAGNIFICAT

MAGNIFICAT anima mea Dominum.

Et exsultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.

Quia respexit humilitatem ancillæ suæ: ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est: et sanctum nomen ejus.

Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies: timentibus eum.

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo: dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.

Deposuit potentes de sede: et exaltavit humiles.

Esurientes implevit bonis: et divites dimisit inanes.

Suscepit Israel puerum suum: recordatus misericordiæ suæ.

Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros: Abraham et semini ejus in sæcula.

Gloria Patri. *etc.*

### PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN YOUTH

O Blessed Aloysius, model and patron of Christian youth, deign to intercede in behalf of your young brothers with the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Divine Heart of Jesus, we offer Thee, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and under the patronage of the angelic Aloysius, the prayers, works and sufferings of this day, for the protection of the faith and purity of all Christian youth; for the prosperity of our schools, ecclesiastical colleges and seminaries, and all homes of Christian education; for the increase of sodalities, the success of Catholic associations of youth, and the welfare of all Christian teachers; so that, having imitated on earth the innocence, the piety, and the penance of St. Aloysius, they may share, one day, his glory with him in paradise. Amen.

### CONSECRATION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN, AFTER HOLY COMMUNION

Most kind Mother, I consecrate to thee my body which has just been honored and sanctified by the presence of thy divine Son, my soul which has conversed with Him, my heart which has loved Him. O dearest Mother, may the words which I uttered be made acceptable to Him through thy intercession! and do thou tell Him the things which I should have said, but was not able to express. Do thou love Him and beseech Him for thy poor child. Receive and keep me in thy heart; warn me, protect me, and guide me during this day, that I may faithfully serve thy divine Son, and please Him in all my thoughts, desires, and actions. Amen.

*En ego,* page 29

# PRAYERS TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

## THE ANGELUS

ANGELUS Domini nuntiavit Mariæ, et concepit de Spiritu Sancto.

*Ave Maria.*

Ecce ancilla Domini: fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.

*Ave Maria.*

Et Verbum caro factum est, et habitavit in nobis.

*Ave Maria.*

*V.* Ora pro nobis, Sancta Dei Genitrix.

*R.* Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi.

THE Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary, and she conceived of the Holy Ghost.

*Hail Mary.*

Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it done unto me according to Thy word.

*Hail Mary.*

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

*Hail Mary.*

*V.* Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

*R.* That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

### *Oremus*

Gratiam tuam, quæsumus, Domine, mentibus nostris infunde: ut qui, angelo nuntiante, Christi Filii tui incarnationem cognovimus, per Passionem ejus et crucem, ad

### *Let us pray*

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by

resurrectionis gloriam perducamur. Per eumdem Christum Dominum nostrum. *R.* Amen.

His Passion and cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ our Lord. *R.* Amen.

Plenary Indulgence once a month to all who, every day, at the sound of the bell, morning, noon, or evening, shall say the Angelus. Indulgence of 100 days every time.

## THE MEMORARE*

MEMORARE, O piissima Virgo Maria, non esse auditum a sæculo quemquam ad tua currentem præsidia, tua implorantem auxilia, tua petentem suffragia, esse derelictum. Ego tali animatus confidentia, ad te, Virgo virginum, Mater, curro, ad te venio, coram te gemens peccator assisto; noli, Mater Verbi, verba mea despicere, sed audi propitia, et exaudi. Amen.

REMEMBER, most compassionate Virgin Mary, Mary, it is utterly unheard of that anyone should have recourse to thy protection, implore thy aid, invoke thy intercession, and be left forlorn. Heartened with the confidence this truth inspires, I hasten to thee, O Virgin of virgins and Mother. To thee I come, before thee I stand to urge my plea, a contrite sinner. O Mother of the Word Divine, count not my words unworthy of regard, but lend a kindly ear to them and grant my prayer. Amen.

Indulgence of 300 days every time.

Plenary Indulgence once a month to those who say the prayer once a day for a whole month and who confess, receive Holy

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* Translation by Rev. Richard E. Power.

Communion and pray in a church or public oratory for the intentions of the Holy Father once during the month. (Pius IX, Dec. 11, 1846.)

### PRAYER OF ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA

O Domina mea, Sancta Maria, me in tuam benedictam fidem, ac singularem custodiam, et in sinum misericordiæ tuæ, hodie et quotidie, et in hora exitus mei, animam meam et corpus meum tibi commendo: omnem spem et consolationem meam, omnes angustias et miserias meas, vitam et finem vitæ meæ tibi committo: ut per tuam sanctissimam intercessionem, et per tua merita, omnia mea dirigantur et disponantur opera, secundum tuam tuique Filii voluntatem. Amen.

O holy Mary, my Lady, into thy blessed trust and special custody, and into the bosom of thy mercy I this day, every day, and in the hour of my death, commend my soul and my body: to thee I commit all my anxieties and miseries, my life and the end of my life, that by thy most holy intercession and by thy merits all my actions may be directed and disposed according to thy will and that of thy Son. Amen.

Indulgence of 200 days, once a day.

### DEDICATION TO MARY

My Queen! my Mother! I give thee all myself; and, to show my devotion to thee, I consecrate to thee this day my eyes, ears, mouth, heart, my entire self. Wherefore, O loving Mother, as I am thy own, keep me, defend me, as thy property and possession. Amen.

Indulgence of 100 days, once a day if said morning and evening. Plenary Indulgence once a month, on the usual conditions.

### PRAYER OF ST. ALPHONSUS

Most holy Mary, Immaculate Virgin and Mother, to thee who art the Mother of my Lord, the refuge of sinners, I, who am the most miserable of all, have recourse to-day. I worship thee, O great Queen, and I thank thee for the many favors thou hast done me up to now, especially for having preserved me from hell, which I have so often deserved. I love thee, most dear Lady; and by the love I bear thee I promise to desire ever to serve thee and to do all I can to make thee loved by others. I place all my hopes in thee, all my salvation. Accept me for thy servant and shelter me under thy mantle, O thou Mother of mercy. And since thou art so powerful with God, free me from all temptations, or obtain for me strength to overcome them as long as I live. Of thee I ask true love of Jesus Christ. Through thee I hope to die a good death. O Mother, by the love thou bearest to God, I pray thee to help me always, but specially in the last moment of my life. Do not leave me until thou seest me safe in Heaven, there to bless thee and sing thy mercies for all eternity. This is my hope. Amen.

**Indulgence, 300 days, every time. Pius IX, September 7, 1854.**

### FOR THE CONVERSION OF HERETICS AND SCHISMATICS

O Mary, Mother of mercy, and refuge of sinners, deign to look with pity upon the nations seduced by the errors of heresy and schism. Thou, who art the Seat of Wisdom, enlighten the minds surrounded by the darkness of ignorance and sin; may they clearly know that the Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church is the only true Church of Jesus Christ, and the only unfailing source of sanctity and salvation! Beseech thy divine Son to grant us their sincere and complete conversion: obtain for them the grace to accept all the truths of our holy faith, and to make their submission to the Roman Pontiff, the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth; so that, being at last united by the sweet bonds of divine charity, we may form but one flock under the care and guidance of the same shepherd, and all together sing thy praise, O glorious Virgin, in the transports of eternal joy and glory: "Gaude, Virgo Maria, quia cunctas hæreses sola interemisti in universo mundo." Amen.

*Hail Mary*, three times.

## ANTHEMS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

### Alma Redemptoris

Alma Redemptoris Mater, quæ pervia cœli porta manes, et Stella maris, succurre cadenti, surgere qui curat populo. Tu quæ genuisti, natura mirante, tuum sanctum Genitorem: Virgo prius ac posterius, Gabrielis ab ore sumens illud Ave, peccatorum miserere.

### IN ADVENT

*V.* Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariæ.
*R.* Et concepit de Spiritu Sancto.

### *Oremus*

Gratiam tuam, quæsumus, Domine, mentibus nostris infunde, ut qui, Angelo nuntiante, Christi Filii tui incarnationem cognovimus, per passionem ejus et crucem ad resurrectionis gloriam perducamur. Per eumdem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

### FROM CHRISTMAS TO THE PURIFICATION

*V.* Post partum virgo inviolata permansisti.
*R.* Dei Genitrix, intercede pro nobis.

### *Oremus*

Deus, qui salutis æternæ, beatæ Mariæ virginitate fecunda, humano generi præmia præstitisti: tribue, quæsumus, ut ipsam pro nobis intercedere sentiamus, per quam meruimus auctorem vitæ suscipere, Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum. Amen

## AVE REGINA

AVE, Regina cœlorum:
Ave, Domina Angelorum.
Salve radix, salve porta,
Ex qua mundo lux est orta.
Gaude, Virgo gloriosa,
Super omnes speciosa.
Vale, O valde decora,
Et pro nobis Christum exora.

*V.* Dignare me laudare te, Virgo, sacrata.
*R.* Da mihi virtutem contra hostes tuos.

### *Oremus*

Concede, misericors Deus, fragilitati nostræ præsidium: ut qui sanctæ Dei Genitricis memoriam agimus, intercessionis ejus auxilio, a nostris iniquitatibus resurgamus. Per eumdem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

## REGINA CŒLI

REGINA cœli, lætare, Alleluia,
Quia quem meruisti portare, Alleluia,
Resurrexit sicut dixit, Alleluia.
Ora pro nobis Deum, Alleluia.

*V.* Gaude, et lætare, Virgo Maria, Alleluia.
*R.* Quia surrexit Dominus vere, Alleluia.

### *Oremus*

Deus, qui per resurrectionem Filii tui Domini nostri Jesu Christi mundum lætificare dignatus es: præsta, quæsumus; ut per ejus Genitricem Virginem Mariam, perpetuæ capiamus gaudia vitæ. Per eumdem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

## SALVE REGINA

SALVE, Regina, Mater misericordiæ, vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve. Ad te clamamus exsules filii Hevæ. Ad te suspiramus gementes et flentes in hac lacrymarum valle. Eia ergo, advocata nostra, illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte. Et Jesum benedictum fructum ventris tui nobis post hoc exsilium ostende. O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.

*V.* Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei Genitrix.
*R.* Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi.

### *Oremus*

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, qui gloriosæ Virginis Matris Mariæ corpus et animam, ut dignum Filii tui habitaculum effici mereretur, Spiritu Sancto cooperante præparasti: da, ut cujus commemoratione lætamur, ejus pia intercessione, ab instantibus malis, et a morte perpetua liberemur. Per eumdem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

### STABAT MATER

[1] Stabat Mater dolorosa
Juxta crucem lacrymosa,
Dum pendebat Filius.

[2] Cujus animam gementem,
Contristatam et dolentem,
Pertransivit gladius.

[3] O quam tristis et afflicta
Fuit illa benedicta
Mater Unigeniti.

[4] Quæ mœrebat et dolebat,
Pia Mater, dum videbat
Nati pœnas inclyti.

[5] Quis est homo qui non fleret,
Matrem Christi si videret.
In tanto supplicio?

[6] Quis non posset contristari
Christi Matrem contemplari
Dolentem cum Filio?

[7] Pro peccatis suæ gentis
Vidit Jesum in tormentis,
Et flagellis subditum.

[8] Vidit suum dulcem Natum
Moriendo desolatum,
Dum emisit spiritum.

[9] Eia, Mater fons amoris,
Me sentire vim doloris
Fac, ut tecum lugeam.

[10] Fac ut ardeat cor meum
In amando Christum Deum,
Ut sibi complaceam.

[11] Sancta Mater, istud agas,
Crucifixi fige plagas
Cordi meo valide.

[12] Tui Nati vulnerati,
Tam dignati pro me pati,
Pœnas mecum divide.

[13] Fac me tecum pie flere,
Crucifixo condolere,
Donec ego vixero.

[14] Juxta crucem tecum stare,
Et me tibi sociare
In planctu desidero.

[15] Virgo virginum præclara,
Mihi jam non sis amara:
Fac me tecum plangere.

[16] Fac ut portem Christi mortem,
Passionis fac consortem
Et plagas recolere.

[17] Fac me plagis vulnerari,
Fac me cruce inebriari,
Et cruore Filii.

[18] Flammis ne urar succensus,
Per te, Virgo, sim defensus
In die judicii.

[19] Christe, cum sit hinc exire,
Da per Matrem me venire
Ad palmam victoriæ.

[20] Quando corpus morietur,
Fac ut animæ donetur
Paradisi gloria. Amen.

### AVE, MARIS STELLA

[1] AVE, maris stella,
Dei Mater alma,
Atque semper virgo,
Felix cœli porta.

[2] Sumens illud Ave
Gabrielis ore
Funda nos in pace,
Mutans Hevæ nomen.

[3] Solve vincla reis,
Profer lumen cæcis,
Mala nostra pelle,
Bona cuncta posce.

[4] Monstra te esse matrem:
Sumat per te preces,
Qui pro nobis natus
Tulit esse tuus.

[5] Virgo singularis,
Inter omnes mitis,
Nos culpis solutos
Mites fac et castos.

[6] Vitam præsta puram,
Iter pàra tutum,
Ut videntes Jesum,
Semper collætemur.

[7] Sit laus Deo Patri,
Summo Christo decus,
Spiritui Sancto,
Tribus honor unus. Amen.

### EJACULATORY PRAYERS

Sweet heart of Mary, be my salvation.
Indulgence of 300 days, each time.

O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee.

Cor Mariæ immaculatum, ora pro nobis.

Regina cleri, ora pro nobis.

Maria, monstra te esse matrem.

*Invocations from the Litany.*

## THE HOLY ROSARY

IN ORDER to say this beautiful prayer with attention and devotion, one of the following methods may be used:

*First Method.* Form a special intention before each decade: ask for some virtue, grace, or temporal favor, for yourself and for others.

*Second Method.* Think, during each decade, of some particular mystery of Our Lord or the Blessed Virgin. This condition is required to gain the indulgences attached to the recitation of the Rosary.

*Third Method.* Address your praise and petition to the Blessed Virgin as represented by the invocations of the Litany. For instance: *Hail Mary . . . . Holy Mary . . . .* adding mentally "*Mother of divine grace*" or "*Virgin most pure.*"

*Fourth Method.* When passing from one decade to another, kneel, in spirit, before some particular shrine or statue of the Blessed Virgin associated, in your past experience, with some fervent prayer or pious impression.

## THE MYSTERIES OF THE HOLY ROSARY, AND THE SPIRIT OF EACH ONE

### THE FIVE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

*On Monday and Thursday*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1—The Annunciation. | Humility. |
| 2—The Visitation. | Fraternal Charity. |
| 3—The Birth of Our Lord. | Spirit of Poverty. |
| 4—The Presentation of Our Lord. | Obedience. |
| 5—Jesus in the Temple. | Love of Study. |

### THE FIVE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

*On Tuesday and Friday*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1—The Agony in the Garden. | Fervor in Prayer. |
| 2—The Scourging at the Pillar. | Mortification. |
| 3—The Crowning with thorns. | Christian Courage. |
| 4—The Carrying of the Cross. | Patience and Resignation. |
| 5—The Crucifixion. | Spirit of Self-Sacrifice. |

### THE FIVE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

*On Sunday, Wednesday, Saturday*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1—The Resurrection. | Faith, New Life in Christ. |
| 2—The Ascension. | Hope, Desire of Heaven. |

| | |
|---|---|
| 3—The Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Disciples. | Zeal for souls. |
| 4—The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. | Filial Devotion to Mary. |
| 5—The Crowning of the Blessed Virgin. | Perseverance. |

# PRAYERS TO THE SAINTS

## PRAYERS TO ONE'S PATRON SAINT

O HEAVENLY Patron, whose name I have the honor to bear, pray earnestly at all times to God for me; confirm me in the faith; strengthen me in virtue, defend me in the battle of life; so that, conquering the enemy of my soul, I may deserve to be rewarded with everlasting glory. Amen.

Indulgence of 300 days.

Plenary Indulgence under the usual conditions once a month if this prayer has been recited daily for a whole month (S. C. Holy Office July 24, 1912; S. Ap. Penit., June 10, 1927).

Patron, whose name I bear, be mindful of me before God. Pray for me that I may always live as I ought, that I may keep the faith and be victorious in the battle of life. Amen.

Indulgence of 300 days.

Plenary Indulgence under the usual conditions once a month if this prayer has been recited every day for a whole month (S. Ap. Penit., Nov. 7, 1922, and June 10, 1927).

## PRAYERS TO ST. JOSEPH

### FOR THE CHURCH

TO THEE, O blessed Joseph, we have recourse in our distress; and having besought the help of thy most holy Spouse, we earnestly and trustfully seek also the advantage of thy intercession. By the holy love that bound thee to the immaculate Virgin Mother of God, and the fatherly affection with which thou didst cherish the Child Jesus, we humbly pray thee to look kindly upon those whom Jesus Christ has purchased as a heritage by His Blood, and to apply to our necessities the riches of thy power with God.

Protect, O most watchful Guardian of the divine

Family, those who are chosen unto life in Jesus Christ; keep from us, O most loving Father, all taint of error and corruption. Graciously extend to us thy heavenly aid, most mighty Safeguard, in our struggle with the powers of darkness; and even as of old thou didst snatch the Child Jesus from the danger that imperilled His life, so now deliver God's Holy Church from the insidious attacks of the enemy and from all adversity. Shield also each one of us with thy unfailing patronage, so that, imitating thy example and sustained by thy help, we may live a virtuous life, die a holy death and attain to everlasting blessedness in heaven. Amen.

Indulgence of 300 days, once a day.

Indulgence of seven years and seven times forty days during the month of October after the recitation of the Rosary (Leo XIII, Encycl. Aug. 15, 1889; S. C. Indulg., Sept. 21, 1889; S. Ap. Penit., May 17, 1927).

### TO OBTAIN THE GRACE OF PRESERVING CHASTITY

Virginum custos et pater, Sancte Joseph, cujus fideli custodiæ ipsa innocentia, Christus Jesus, et Virgo virginum Maria, commissa fuit; te per hoc utrumque carissimum pignus, Jesum et Mariam, obsecro et obtestor, ut me, ab omni immunditia præservatum, mente incontaminata, puro corde et casto corpore, Jesu et Mariae semper facias castissime famulari. Amen.

*Prayer for a happy death,* page 34.

### ORATIO AD S. JOSEPH

Deus, qui ineffabili providentia beatum Joseph sanctissimæ Genitricis tuæ sponsum eligere dignatus es: præsta quæsumus, ut quem protectorem veneramur in terris, intercessorem habere mereamur in cœlis. Qui vivis et regnas in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

*O felicem virum,* page 40.

## PRAYERS AND INVOCATIONS TO THE HOLY FAMILY

### PRAYER

O LORD Jesus, grant that we may constantly imitate the examples of Thy holy Family, in order that, at the hour of death, when the glorious Virgin, Thy Mother, comes with St. Joseph to meet us, we may deserve to be received by Thee into the eternal tabernacles of heaven. Amen.

### INVOCATIONS

JESUS, Mary, and thou, good Joseph, bless us now and in our mortal agony.

Indulgence of 50 days. (S. C. Indulg., June 9, 1906).

To the faithful who invoke the holy names: *Jesus, Mary, and Joseph,* together, the following indulgences are granted:

Indulgence of seven years and seven times forty days.

Plenary Indulgence under the usual conditions once a month if this prayer has been recited every day for a whole month (Pius X, autogr. rescr., June 8, 1906; reg. June 16, 1906; S. Ap. Penit., May 17, 1927).

## PRAYERS TO THE APOSTLES

### TO SAINT PETER

O GOD, who, in delivering to Thy blessed Apostle Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven, didst confer on him the pontifical power of binding and loosing: grant that by the help of his intercession we may be loosed from the bonds of our sins. Amen.

### TO SAINT PAUL

O God, who, by the preaching of the blessed Apostle Paul, didst teach the multitude of the gentiles: grant, we beseech Thee, that we who keep his memory may also enjoy his patronage. Amen.

### TO SAINT JOHN

O glorious Apostle, who on account of thy virginal purity, wast so beloved by Jesus as to deserve to lay thy head upon His divine breast, and to be, in His place, as son to His most holy Mother: I beg thee to inflame me with a most ardent love towards Jesus and Mary. Obtain for me from Our Lord that I, too, with a heart purified from earthly affections, may be made worthy to be ever united to Jesus as a faithful disciple, and to Mary as a devoted son, both here on earth and eternally in heaven. Amen.

**Indulgence of 200 days, once a day.**

### Prayer from the Mass of St. Thomas Aquinas

O God, who by the wonderful learning of blessed Thomas, Thy confessor, givest glory to Thy Church, and by his holy deeds makest her fruitful: grant, we beseech Thee, that we may both see with the understanding what he taught, and follow his example in what he practised. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Oratio Sancti Thomae

### (ante lectionem aut studium recitanda)

Concede mihi misericors Deus, quae tibi placita sunt ardenter concupiscere, prudenter investigare, veraciter agnoscere, et perfecte adimplere ad laudem et gloriam nominis tui. Amen.

**Indulgence of 300 days.**

## PRAYER TO ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

O GLORIOUS St. Vincent, heavenly patron of all charitable associations and father of all the unfortunate, who in thy lifetime didst not reject anyone who had recourse to thee, see now by how many evils we are oppressed, and come to our assistance. Obtain from Our Lord help for the poor, solace for the sick, consolation for the afflicted, protection for the abandoned, charity for the rich, conversion for sinners, zeal for priests, peace for the Church, tranquillity among nations, and salvation for all. May all feel the effects of thy merciful intercession, so that, sustained by thee in the miseries of this life, we may be able to join thee above where there will be no more strife, lamentation or sorrow but joy, exultation, and beatitude forever. Amen.

**Indulgence of 100 days, once a day.**

## PRAYER FROM THE MASS OF ST. JOHN MARY VIANNEY

O ALMIGHTY and merciful God, who didst make the blessed John Mary admirable by his pastoral zeal and constant love of prayer and penance: grant, we beseech Thee, that, through his example and intercession, we may win over to Jesus Christ the souls of our brethren, and reach with them eternal glory. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## PRAYER FROM THE MASS OF ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

O GOD, by Whose gracious will blessed Francis, Thy confessor and bishop, became all things unto all men for the saving of their souls: mercifully grant that, being filled with the sweetness of Thy love, we may, through the guidance of his counsels and by the aid of his merits, attain unto the joys of everlasting life. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## PRAYERS TO THE HOLY ANGELS

### FROM THE MASSES OF THE ANGELS

DEUS, qui miro ordine, Angelorum ministeria hominumque dispensas: concede propitius; ut, a quibus tibi ministrantibus in cœlo semper assistitur, ab his in terra vita nostra muniatur.

Deus, qui ineffabili providentia sanctos Angelos tuos ad nostram custodiam mittere dignaris: largire supplicibus tuis, et eorum semper protectione defendi, et æterna societate gaudere. Amen.

### TO THE GUARDIAN ANGEL

ANGELE DEI, qui custos es mei, me tibi commissum pietate superna illumina, custodi, rege et guberna. Amen.

### TO ST. MICHAEL

SANCTE Michael Archangele, defende nos in prœlio, ne pereamus in tremendo Dei judicio. Amen.

## SHORT INVOCATIONS

Deus meus et omnia.

**Indulgence of 50 days, each time.**

My Jesus, mercy.

**Indulgence of 100 days, each time.**

Dulcissime Jesu, ne sis mihi judex, sed salvator.

**Indulgence of 50 days, each time.**

Sweet Heart of Jesus, be my love.

**Indulgence of 300 days, each time.**

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, in satisfaction for my sins and for the wants of Holy Church.

**Indulgence of 100 days, each time.**

Sweet Heart of Mary, be my salvation.

Indulgence of 300 days, each time.

Blessed be the holy and Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God.

Indulgence of 300 days, each time.

Praised and thanked at every moment be the Most Holy and Most Divine Sacrament.

Indulgence of 300 days. Plenary Indulgence under the usual conditions if this ejaculation has been recited for a whole month.

Jesu mitis et humilis corde, fac cor meum secundum cor tuum.

Indulgence of 300 days, each time.

### PRAYER FOR THE DEAD

*De profundis*, page 33.

### PRAYERS FOR THE LIVING

*See* Table of Contents, and prayers for thanksgiving after Mass.

# LITURGICAL HYMNS

## Adoro Te

*Thirteenth Century.* *St. Thomas Aquinas*

[1] Adoro Te devote, latens Deitas,
Quae sub his figuris vere latitas:
Tibi se cor meum totum subjicit,
Quia te contemplans totum deficit.

[2] Visus, tactus, gustus in te fallitur,
Sed auditu solo tuto creditur.
Credo quidquid dixit Dei Filius,
Nil hoc verbo veritatis verius.

[3] In cruce latebat sola Deitas,
At hic latet simul et humanitas:
Ambo tamen credens atque confitens,
Peto quod petivit latro pœnitens.

[4] Plagas sicut Thomas non intueor:

I adore Thee devoutly, O hidden God, truly present under these veils: my heart subjects itself to Thee without reserve; for in contemplating Thee it feels utterly powerless.

Sight, touch, and taste are deceived concerning Thee; but hearing alone suffices to confirm my faith. I believe whatever the Son of God has said; nothing is more true than this word of Him who is the Truth.

On the cross Thy divinity alone was concealed; but here Thy humanity also is hidden: yet believing and confessing both, I pray for what the penitent thief asked of Thee.

I do not see Thy wounds, as Thomas did:

| | |
|---|---|
| Deum tamen meum te confiteor.<br>Fac me tibi semper magis credere,<br>In te spem habere, te diligere. | yet I acknowledge Thee as my God. Increase daily my faith, my hope, and my love for Thee. |
| 5 O memoriale mortis Domini,<br>Panis vivus vitam præstans homini,<br>Præsta meæ menti de te vivere,<br>Et te illi semper dulce sapere. | O memorial of the Lord's death, living Bread that givest life to man, grant that my soul may live of Thee, and always taste the sweetness of Thy presence. |
| 6 Pie pellicane, Jesu Domine,<br>Me immundum munda tuo sanguine:<br>Cujus una stilla salvum facere<br>Totum mundum quit ab omni scelere. | O loving pelican, Jesus my Lord, wash away my sins in Thy Blood: one drop of it can save the world from all its crimes. |
| 7 Jesu quem velatum nunc aspicio:<br>Oro, fiat illud quod tam sitio:<br>Ut, te revelata cernens facie,<br>Visu sim beatus tuæ gloriæ. Amen. | Jesus, Whom I now behold under a veil: I beseech Thee, may this happen which I so ardently desire: may I, beholding Thee with Thy face unveiled, be for ever happy in the vision of Thy glory. Amen. |

## VERBUM SUPERNUM

*Thirteenth Century.* *St. Thomas Aquinas*

1 VERBUM supernum prodiens,
Nec Patris linquens dexteram,
Ad opus suum exiens,
Venit ad vitæ vesperam.

THE Word descending from above, without leaving the right hand of His Father, and going forth to do His work, reached the evening of His life.

2 In mortem a discipulo
Suis tradendus æmulis,
Prius in vitæ ferculo
Se tradidit discipulis.

When about to be given over to his enemies by one of his disciples, to suffer death, He first gave Himself to His disciples as the Bread of life.

3 Quibus sub bina specie
Carnem dedit et sanguinem;
Ut duplicis substantiæ
Totum cibaret hominem.

Under a twofold species He gave them His Flesh and His Blood; that He might thus wholly feed man made up of a twofold substance.

4 Se nascens dedit socium,
Convescens in edulium,
Se moriens in pretium,
Se regnans dat in præmium.

By His birth He gave Himself as our companion; at the Last Supper He gave Himself as our food; dying on the Cross He gave Himself as our ransom; reigning in heaven He gives Himself as our reward.

5 O salutaris hostia,

O saving Victim, who

Quæ cœli pandis ostium,
Bella premunt hostilia,
Da robur, fer auxilium.

throwest open the gate of heaven, the attacks of bitter enemies oppress us; give us strength, bring us aid.

6 Uni trinoque Domino
Sit sempiterna gloria:
Qui vitam sine termino
Nobis donet in patria.
Amen.

Eternal glory be to God, one in three Persons: may He give us life forever in our heavenly home. Amen.

## PANGE LINGUA

*Thirteenth Century. St. Thomas Aquinas*

1 PANGE lingua gloriosi
Corporis mysterium,
Sanguinisque pretiosi
Quem in mundi pretium
Fructus ventris generosi
Rex effudit gentium.

SING, O my tongue, the mystery of the glorious Body and of the precious Blood which the King of nations, the fruit of a noble womb, shed for the ransom of the world.

2 Nobis datus, nobis natus
Ex intacta Virgine,
Et in mundo conversatus,
Sparso verbi semine,
Sui moras incolatus
Miro clausit ordine.

Given to us, born for us of a spotless Virgin, He dwelt in the world, sowing the seed of the divine word, and then closed in a wondrous manner the days of His sojourn on earth.

3 In supremæ nocte cœnæ,
Recumbens cum fratribus,
Observata lege plene

On the night of the Last Supper, reclining at table with His brethren, after

Cibis in legalibus,
Cibum turbæ duodenæ
Se dat suis manibus.

[4] Verbum caro, panem verum
Verbo carnem efficit:
Fitque sanguis Christi merum,
Et si sensus deficit,
Ad firmandum cor sincerum
Sola fides sufficit.

[5] Tantum ergo Sacramentum
Veneremur cernui:
Et antiquum documentum
Novo cedat ritui:
Præstet fides supplementum
Sensuum defectui.

[6] Genitori, Genitoque
Laus et jubilatio,
Salus, honor, virtus quoque
Sit et benedictio:
Procedenti ab utroque
Compar sit laudatio.

He has fully complied with the law concerning the ritual meal, to the twelve assembled He gives Himself as food with His own hands.

The Word made flesh, by His word changes true bread into His flesh: and wine becomes the Blood of Christ, and where man's senses fail, faith alone is enough to reassure a sincere heart.

Let us then, in humble prostration, adore so great a Sacrament: and let the ancient forms give way to the new rites: let our faith supplement the weakness of our senses.

To the Father, and to the Son be praise, songs of joy, salutation, honor, power also and benediction: and to Him who proceeds from both let equal praise resound.

## SACRIS SOLEMNIIS

*Thirteenth Century.* *St. Thomas Aquinas*

1 SACRIS solemniis juncta sint gaudia,
Et ex præcordiis sonent præconia;
Recedant vetera, nova sint omnia,
Corda, voces, et opera.

WITH these sacred and solemn rites let our joy be blended, and let the songs of praise resound from our inmost heart; let ancient symbols depart, let everything be new, our hearts, our voices, and our works.

2 Noctis recolitur cœna novissima,
Qua Christus creditur agnum et azyma
Dedisse fratribus, juxta legitima
Priscis indulta patribus.

We now recall to mind the night and the Last Supper, during which we believe that Christ gave to His brethren the lamb and the unleavened bread, according to the rites prescribed to the ancient fathers.

3 Post agnum typicum, expletis epulis,
Corpus Dominicum datum discipulis,
Sic totum omnibus quod totum singulis,
Ejus fatemur manibus.

After the symbolic lamb was consumed and the meal ended, the Lord with his own hands, as we profess, gave His Body to His Disciples, entire to all, entire to each one.

4 Dedit fragilibus corporis ferculum,

They were weak, and He gave them His Body

Dedit et tristibus sanguinis poculum,
Dicens: accipite quod trado vasculum,
Omnes ex eo bibite.

as food; they were sad, and He gave them the chalice of His Blood, saying: "Receive ye this cup which I offer you, and drink ye all of it."

[5] Sic sacrificium istud instituit,
Cujus officium committi voluit
Solis presbyteris, quibus sic congruit
Ut sumant, et dent ceteris.

Thus He instituted this sacrifice, and entrusted it to the care of His priests alone, whose office it is to eat the sacred food, and to give it to others.

[6] Panis angelicus fit panis hominum;
Dat panis cœlicus figuris terminum:
O res mirabilis, manducat Dominum
Pauper, servus, et humilis.

The Bread of Angels becomes the Bread of men; The Bread from heaven does away with figures: O wondrous thing, the poor, the servant, and the lowly eat their Lord.

[7] Te trina Deitas unaque poscimus,
Sic nos tu visita, sicut te colimus:
Per tuas semitas duc nos quo tendimus,
Ad lucem quam inhabitas.

O God, one substance in Three Persons, we beseech Thee, come Thou to visit us, as we adore Thee: guide us on Thy paths whither we direct our course, to the light wherein Thou dost dwell.

## LAUDA SION

*Thirteenth Century. St. Thomas Aquinas*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 LAUDA Sion Salvatorem<br>Lauda ducem et pastorem<br>In hymnis et canticis. | PRAISE, O Sion, thy Savior, praise thy leader and shepherd, in hymns and canticles. |
| Quantum potes, tantum aude:<br>Quia major omni laude,<br>Nec laudare sufficis. | Do not hesitate to strive your best: for He is above all praise, and you cannot praise Him enough. |
| 2 Laudis thema specialis<br>Panis vivus et vitalis<br>Hodie proponitur. | A special theme of praise is, on this day, proposed to us, the living and life-giving Bread. |
| Quem in sacræ mensa cœnæ,<br>Turbæ fratrum duodenæ<br>Datum non ambigitur. | The Bread which, without any doubt, was given to the assembly of the twelve brethren, at the table of the Holy Supper. |
| 3 Sit laus plena, sit sonora,<br>Sit jucunda, sit decora,<br>Mentis jubilatio. | Let our praise be full and loud, let the joy of each soul resound in pleasing and becoming tones. |
| Dies enim solemnis agitur,<br>In qua mensæ prima recolitur<br>Hujus institutio. | For this is the solemn day on which we commemorate the origin of this banquet. |
| 4 In hac mensa novi Regis,<br>Novum Pascha novæ legis,<br>Phase vetus terminat. | At this table of the new King, the new Pasch of the new Law puts an end |

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| Vetustatem novitas,<br>Umbram fugat veritas,<br>Noctem lux eliminat. | to the ancient rite.<br>The new rite drives away the old, truth puts to flight the shadow, the light of day banishes the darkness of night. |
| [5] Quod in cœna Christus gessit,<br>Faciendum hoc expressit<br>In sui memoriam.<br>Docti sacris institutis,<br>Panem, vinum in salutis<br>Consecramus hostiam. | What Christ did at the Last Supper, He ordered us to do in remembrance of Him.<br>Taught by His sacred precept, we consecrate bread and wine into the Host of salvation. |
| [6] Dogma datur Christianis,<br>Quod in carnem transit panis,<br>Et vinum in sanguinem.<br>Quod non capis, quod non vides,<br>Animosa firmat fides,<br>Præter rerum ordinem. | This is a dogma given to Christians that bread is changed into Jesus' Flesh, and wine into His Blood.<br>What you do not understand, what you do not see, a lively faith confirms in a supernatural manner. |
| [7] Sub diversis speciebus,<br>Signis tantum, et non rebus.<br>Latent res eximiæ.<br>Caro cibus, sanguis potus: | Under different species, which are but signs, not real things, a priceless treasure lies hidden.<br>His flesh is food, His |

Manet tamen Christus totus
Sub utraque specie.

Blood is drink: yet Christ remains entire under each species.

8 A sumente non concisus,
Non confractus, non divisus,
Integer accipitur.
Sumit unus, sumunt mille,
Quantum isti, tantum ille,
Nec sumptus consumitur.

He who partakes of Him neither severs, nor breaks, nor divides Him; he receives Him entire.

Whether one or a thousand receive Him, one receives as much as a thousand do: and when received He is not diminished.

9 Sumunt boni, sumunt mali:
Sorte tamen inæquali,
Vitæ, vel interitus.
Mors est malis, vita bonis:
Vide paris sumptionis
Quam sit dispar exitus.

Both the good and the wicked receive Him: but with the unequal result of life or death.

He brings death to the unworthy, and life to the just: see how unlike are the effects of a like communion.

10 Fracto demum Sacramento
Ne vacilles, sed memento
Tantum esse sub fragmento
Quantum toto tegitur.
Nulla rei fit scissura:
Signi tantum fit fractura,

Then indeed when the Bread is broken, doubt not, but remember that there is as much in one fragment as lies hidden in the whole.

There is no division of the substance itself, but

Qua nec status nec statura
Signati minuitur.

only a breaking of the species, by which neither the state nor the size of the substance signified is altered.

[11] Ecce panis angelorum,
Factus cibus viatorum:
Vere panis filiorum,
Non mittendus canibus.

Behold the Bread of angels which has become the food of earthly pilgrims: truly it is the Bread of God's children, which must not be cast to the dogs.

In figuris præsignatur,
Cum Isaac immolatur,
Agnus Paschæ deputatur,
Datur manna patribus.

It was prefigured in types, when Isaac was immolated, when the Paschal Lamb was sacrificed, when manna was given to the fathers.

[12] Bone Pastor, panis vere,
Jesu, nostri miserere:
Tu nos pasce, nos tuere,
Tu nos bona fac videre
In terra viventium.

O Good Shepherd, true Bread, Jesus, have mercy on us: feed us and protect us, make us see Thy blessings in the land of the living.

Tu qui cuncta scis et vales,
Qui nos pascis hic mortales:
Tuos ibi commensales,
Cohæredes et sodales,
Fac sanctorum civium.

Thou Whose knowledge and power are boundless, Thou Who feedest us mortals here below, make us, there in heaven, Thy guests, the co-heirs and companions of Thy saints.

## AVE VERUM

### *Fourteenth Century. Ascribed to Pope Innocent VI*

AVE verum Corpus natum
De Maria Virgine,
Vere passum, immolatum
In cruce pro homine.
Cujus latus perforatum
Unda fluxit et sanguine:
Esto nobis prægustatum
Mortis in examine.
O clemens, O pie,
O dulcis Jesu, Fili Mariæ.

HAIL, true Body born of the Virgin Mary, which didst truly suffer and wast immolated on the Cross for man: from Whose pierced side flowed water and blood: be to us a foretaste of heaven in the trial of death. O clement, O loving, O sweet Jesus, Son of Mary.

## JESU DULCIS MEMORIA

### *Twelfth Century. St. Bernard*

1 JESU dulcis memoria,
Dans vera cordis gaudia:
Sed super mel et omnia,
Ejus dulcis præsentia.

SWEET is the thought of Jesus, which brings true joy to the heart: but surpassing honey and all things is His sweet presence.

2 Nil canitur suavius,
Nil auditur jucundius,
Nil cogitatur dulcius,
Quam Jesus Dei Filius.

Nothing more delightful can be sung, nothing more pleasing can be heard, nothing sweeter can be thought of than Jesus, the Son of God.

3 Jesu spes poenitentibus,

O Jesus, the hope of

Quam pius es petentibus!
Quam bonus te quærentibus!
Sed quid invenientibus?

penitent souls, how kind Thou art to those who pray! how good to those who seek Thee! but what art Thou to those who find Thee?

[4] Nec lingua valet dicere,
Nec littera exprimere:
Expertus potest credere
Quid sit Jesum diligere.

No tongue can tell, no written word can express it: he alone who has experienced it knows what it means to love Jesus.

[5] Sis Jesu nostrum gaudium,
Qui es futurus præmium,
Sit nostra in te gloria,
Per cuncta semper sæcula.

Mayest Thou be our joy, O Jesus, who art to be our reward: may our glory be in Thee forever. Amen.

## JESU REX ADMIRABILIS

*Continuation of the preceding Hymn*

[1] JESU Rex admirabilis,
Et triumphator nobilis,
Dulcedo ineffabilis,
Totus desiderabilis.

O JESUS, admirable King and noble conqueror, ineffable sweetness, in Whom all joys are found.

[2] Quando cor nostrum visitas,
Tunc lucet ei veritas,
Mundi vilescit vanitas,
Et intus fervet caritas.

The heart which Thou visitest shines with the splendor of truth, despises the vain things of the world, and glows with love.

3 Jesu dulcedo cordium,
Fons vivus, lumen mentium,
Excedens omne gaudium,
Et omne desiderium.

Jesus, sweetness of our hearts, living fountain, light of our minds, surpassing every joy and every desire.

4 Jesum omnes agnoscite,
Amorem ejus poscite:
Jesum ardenter quærite,
Quærendo inardescite.

Let all men acknowledge Jesus, let all ask for His love: let all ardently seek Jesus, and in seeking Him burn with love.

5 Te nostra Jesu vox sonet,
Nostri te mores exprimant,
Te corda nostra diligant,
Et nunc, et in perpetuum.

May our voices bless Thee, O Jesus, may our lives express Thine, may our hearts love Thee now and forever.

## JESU DECUS ANGELICUM

*Continuation of the preceding Hymn*

1 JESU decus angelicum,
In aure dulce canticum,
In ore mel mirificum,
In corde nectar cœlicum.

O JESUS, glory of the angels, sweet music to the ears, wonderful honey to the mouth, heavenly nectar to the heart.

2 Qui te gustant esuriunt,
Qui bibunt adhuc sitiunt;
Desiderare nesciunt
Nisi Jesum quem diligunt.

Those who taste of Thee hunger for Thee; those who drink of Thee still thirst for Thee; the only object of their desires is Jesus Whom they love.

[3] O mi Jesu dulcissime,
Spes suspirantis animæ,
Te quærunt piæ lacrimæ,
Te clamor mentis intimæ.

O my most sweet Jesus, the hope of my sighing soul, my loving tears seek Thee, the cry of my inmost heart calls Thee.

[4] Mane nobiscum, Domine,
Et nos illustra lumine;
Pulsa mentis caligine,
Mundum reple dulcedine.

Stay with us, O Lord, make thy light shine in us, dispel darkness from our minds, fill the world with Thy sweetness.

[5] Jesu flos Matris Virginis,
Amor nostræ dulcedinis,
Tibi laus, honor nominis,
Regnum beatitudinis.

O Jesus, the flower of a Virgin Mother, our love and our sweetness, to Thee be praise, honor be to Thy Name, to Thee supreme power in blessedness.

## VENI CREATOR

*Eighth or Ninth Century. Author unknown*

[1] VENI Creator Spiritus,
Mentes tuorum visita,
Imple superna gratia
Quæ tu creasti pectora.

COME, Creator-Spirit, visit the souls of thy children, and fill with heavenly grace the hearts which Thou hast created.

[2] Qui diceris Paraclitus,
Altissimi donum Dei,
Fons vivus, ignis, caritas,
Et spiritalis unctio.

Thou Who art called the Consoler, the gift of God Most High, fountain of life, fire, love, and spiritual unction.

3 Tu septiformis munere,
Digitus paternæ dexteræ,
Tu rite promissum Patris,
Sermone ditans guttura.

Thou the donor of the sevenfold gifts, the finger of the Father's right hand, Thou the express promise of the Father, enriching the tongues with speech.

4 Accende lumen sensibus:
Infunde amorem cordibus,
Infirma nostri corporis
Virtute firmans perpeti.

Kindle Thy light in our minds, pour Thy love into our hearts, grant our weak flesh the support of Thy never-failing strength.

5 Hostem repellas longius,
Pacemque dones protinus,
Ductore sic te prævio,
Vitemus omne noxium.

Drive our enemy farther away, hasten to give us peace: thus following Thee as our guide, may we avoid every danger.

6 Per te sciamus da Patrem,
Noscamus atque Filium;
Teque utriusque Spiritum
Credamus omni tempore.

Grant that through Thee we may know the Father and the Son; grant that we may ever believe in Thee, the Spirit proceeding from both.

7 Deo Patri sit gloria,
Et Filio qui a mortuis
Surrexit, ac Paraclito,
In sæculorum sæcula.

To God the Father be glory, and to the Son risen from the dead, and to the Consoler, for ever and ever.

## VEXILLA REGIS

*Sixth Century. Fortunatus, Bishop of Poitiers*

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| [1] VEXILLA Regis prodeunt:<br>Fulget Crucis mysterium,<br>Qua vita mortem pertulit,<br>Et morte vitam protulit. | THE STANDARDS of the King come forth; now brightly shines the mystery of the Cross, on which Christ, the life, suffered death, and by His death brought forth life for us. |
| [2] Quæ vulnerata lanceæ<br>Mucrone diro, criminum<br>Ut nos lavaret sordibus,<br>Manavit unda, et sanguine. | Wounded by the cruel point of the spear, to cleanse us from the stain of sin He poured out a stream of water and blood. |
| [3] Impleta sunt quæ concinit<br>David fideli carmine,<br>Dicendo nationibus:<br>Regnavit a ligno Deus. | Now are fulfilled the words which David sang in a truthful song, when he said to the nations of the world: "God has reigned from a Tree." |
| [4] Arbor decora et fulgida,<br>Ornata Regis purpura,<br>Electa digno stipite<br>Tam sancta membra tangere. | O beautiful and resplendent Tree, adorned with the purple of the King, chosen to touch with thy worthy trunk limbs that are so holy. |
| [5] Beata cujus brachiis | Blessed art thou, O |

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| Pretium pependit sæculi,<br>Statera facta corporis,<br>Tulitque prædam tartari. | Tree, upon whose arms hung the ransom of the world, thou upon which was weighed the Body which snatched away the prey of hell. |
| 6 O Crux ave, spes unica,<br>Hoc passionis tempore,<br>Piis adauge gratiam,<br>Reisque dele crimina. | Hail, O Cross, our only hope; in this mournful Passion time, give an increase of grace to the just, and wash away the faults of the sinners. |
| 7 Te, fons salutis Trinitas,<br>Collaudet omnis spiritus:<br>Quibus Crucis victoriam<br>Largiris, adde præmium. | Let every soul praise Thee, O Blessed Trinity, Thou the fount of our salvation: to those upon whom Thou dost bestow the victory of the Cross, grant also the eternal reward. |

## Pange Lingua Gloriosi

*Sixth Century*
*Ascribed to Fortunatus, Bishop of Poitiers*

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| 1 Pange lingua gloriosi<br>Lauream certaminis,<br>Et super Crucis trophæo<br>Dic triumphum nobilem:<br>Qualiter Redemptor orbis<br>Immolatus vicerit. | Sing, O my tongue, the victory (the laurel crown) in that glorious battle, and over the trophy of the Cross, tell of a noble triumph: tell how the Redeemer of the |

[2] De parentis protoplasti
Fraude Factor condolens,
Quando pomi noxialis
In necem morsu ruit:
Ipse lignum tunc notavit,
Damna ligni ut solveret.

[3] Hoc opus nostræ salutis
Ordo depoposcerat;
Multiformis proditoris
Ars ut artem falleret,
Et medelam ferret inde
Hostis unde læserat.

[4] Quando venit ergo sacri
Plenitudo temporis,
Missus est ab arce Patris
Natus, orbis Conditor;
Atque ventre virginali
Carne amictus prodiit.

[5] Vagit infans inter arcta
Conditus præsepia:
Membra pannis involuta
Virgo Mater alligat:

world was immolated, and yet conquered.

Grieved by the infidelity of the first man, the work of His hands, when he rushed into death by eating the harmful fruit, the Creator marked out the Tree to undo the harm made by the tree.

The plan of our salvation required this work of reparation; that art might outwit the art of the multiform deceiver, and thence draw the healing balm whence the enemy had inflicted the wound.

When therefore the sacred time had been fully completed, the Son, the Creator of the world, was sent from His Father's home; and clothed in flesh, He came forth of a Virgin's womb.

An infant, He cries in a narrow manger: His Virgin Mother wraps and binds his limbs in

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| Et Dei manus pedesque<br>Stricta cingit fascia. | swaddling-clothes, and tightly folds in a bandage the hands and feet of her God. |

## LUSTRA SEX QUI JAM PEREGIT

*Continuation of the preceding Hymn*

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| 1 LUSTRA sex qui jam peregit,<br>Tempus implens corporis,<br>Sponte libera Redemptor<br>Passioni deditus,<br>Agnus in Crucis levatur<br>Immolandus stipite. | HAVING passed His thirtieth year, thus completing the time of His mortal life, the Redeemer, of His own free will, goes forth to meet His Passion, and as a lamb marked out for the sacrifice, He is raised on the tree of the Cross. |
| 2 Felle potus ecce languet:<br>Spina, clavi, lancea<br>Mite corpus perforarunt:<br>Unda manat et cruor:<br>Terra, pontus, astra, mundus,<br>Quo lavantur flumine. | He is given gall to drink; see how weak He is: thorns, nails, and spear have pierced His tender Body: water and Blood flow forth: the earth, the sea, the heavens, and the world are purified by this stream. |
| 3 Crux fidelis, inter omnes<br>Arbor una nobilis:<br>Silva talem nulla profert | O faithful Cross, above all others the one and only noble tree! No forest |

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| Fronde, flore, germine:<br>Dulce ferrum, dulce lignum,<br>Dulce pondus sustinet. | brings forth thy like in foliage, flower, and fruit: O blessed nails, O blessed wood, which bear so sweet a burden! |
| [4] Flecte ramos arbor alta,<br>Tensa laxa viscera,<br>Et rigor lentescat ille<br>Quem dedit nativitas;<br>Et superni membra Regis<br>Tende miti stipite. | Bend thy branches, O lofty Tree, relax thy tense sinews, suspend that hardness which nature gave thee; and gently stretch on thy trunk the limbs of the heavenly King. |
| [5] Sola digna tu fuisti<br>Ferre mundi victimam;<br>Atque portum præparare<br>Arca mundo naufrago,<br>Quam sacer cruor perunxit,<br>Fusus Agni corpore. | Thou alone wast deemed worthy to bear the Victim of the world; and, like the Ark of old, to prepare a haven for a shipwrecked world, thou which the sacred Blood has anointed, poured forth from the Body of the Lamb. |
| [6] Sempiterna sit beatæ<br>Trinitati gloria,<br>Aequa Patri, Filioque,<br>Par decus Paraclito:<br>Unius Trinique nomen<br>Laudet universitas. | Everlasting glory be to the Blessed Trinity; equal glory be to the Father and the Son: equal honor to the Paraclete: may the whole world praise the name of the one God in three Persons. |

## Popule Meus

### *Improperia—Good Friday*

Popule meus, quid feci tibi? aut in quo contristavi te? responde mihi.

Quia eduxi te de terra Aegypti: parasti crucem Salvatori tuo. Popule meus, *etc.*

Quia eduxi te per desertum quadraginta annis, et manna cibavi te, et introduxi in terram satis bonam: parasti crucem Salvatori tuo. Popule meus, *etc.*

Quid ultra debui facere tibi, et non feci? Ego quidem plantavi te vineam meam speciosissimam: et tu facta es mihi amara: aceto namque sitim meam potasti: et lancea perforasti latus Salvatori tuo. Popule meus, *etc.*

Ego ante te præivi in columna nubis: et tu me duxisti ad prætorium Pilati. Popule meus, *etc.*

Ego te pavi manna per desertum: et tu me cecidisti alapis et flagellis. Popule meus, *etc.*

Ego te potavi aqua salutis de petra: et tu me potasti felle et aceto. Popule meus, *etc.*

Ego dedi tibi sceptrum regale: et tu dedisti capiti meo spineam coronam. Popule meus, *etc.*

Ego te exaltavi magna virtute: et tu me suspendisti patibulo crucis. Popule meus, *etc.*

## Victimæ Paschali Laudes

### *Eleventh Century. Ascribed to Wipo*

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| 1 Victimæ Paschali<br>Laudes immolent Christiani. | To the Paschal Victim let Christians offer a sacrifice of praise. |
| 2 Agnus redemit oves:<br>Christus innocens Patri | The Lamb has redeemed the sheep: Christ, the |

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| Reconciliavit<br>Peccatores. | sinless One, has reconciled sinners to His Father. |
| [3] Mors et vita duello<br>Conflixere mirando:<br>Dux vitæ mortuus, regnat vivus. | Death and Life fought a wondrous battle: the Prince of life, who died, now lives and reigns. |
| [4] Dic nobis, Maria,<br>Quid vidisti in via?<br>Sepulchrum Christi viventis,<br>Et gloriam vidi resurgentis. | Tell us, Mary, what sawest thou on the way? I saw the tomb of the living Christ, I saw the glory of the Lord Who has risen. |
| [5] Angelicos testes,<br>Sudarium et vestes.<br>Surrexit Christus spes mea:<br>Præcedet vos in Galilæam. | I saw the angelic witnesses, the shroud and the linen cloths. Christ, my hope, has risen: He shall go before you into Galilee. |
| [6] Scimus Christum surrexisse<br>A mortuis vere:<br>Tu nobis, victor<br>Rex, miserere.<br>Amen. Alleluia. | We know that Christ has truly risen from the dead: Thou, O victorious King, have mercy on us. Amen. Alleluia. |

## SALUTIS HUMANAE SATOR

*Seventh or Eighth Century. Ambrosian*

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| [1] SALUTIS humanæ Sator,<br>Jesu, voluptas cordium, | O SOWER of man's salvation, Jesus, the delight |

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| Orbis redempti Conditor,<br>Et casta lux amantium. | of our hearts, Creator of the world redeemed by Thee, and pure light of souls that love. |
| [2] Qua victus es clementia,<br>Ut nostra ferres crimina?<br>Mortem subires innocens,<br>A morte nos ut tolleres! | What mercy impelled Thee to bear our sins, and to suffer death, though innocent, in order to free us from death? |
| [3] Perrumpis infernum chaos,<br>Vinctis catenas detrahis:<br>Victor triumpho nobili,<br>Ad dexteram Patris sedes. | Thou didst break through the realm of darkness, Thou didst free the captives from their chains; victor in a noble triumph, Thou dost now sit at the right hand of the Father. |
| [4] Te cogat indulgentia,<br>Ut damna nostra sarcias,<br>Tuique vultus compotes,<br>Dites beato lumine. | May Thy mercy compel Thee to make good our losses, and grant us the precious gift of Thy blessed light, in the contemplation of Thy face. |
| [5] Tu dux ad astra, et semita,<br>Sis meta nostris cordibus,<br>Sis lacrymarum gaudium,<br>Sis dulce vitæ præmium. | Thou, our guide and our way to heaven, be the goal of our hearts, be our joy in sorrow, be to us the sweet reward of life. |

# FIRST FRIDAY DEVOTIONS

## THE PROMISES OF OUR LORD TO SAINT MARGARET MARY,

### FOR SOULS DEVOTED TO HIS SACRED HEART

1. I will give them all the graces necessary for their state of life.
2. I will establish peace in their families.
3. I will comfort them in all their afflictions.
4. I will be their secure refuge during life, and above all in death.
5. I will bestow a special blessing upon all their undertakings.
6. Sinners shall find in My Heart the source and the infinite ocean of mercy.
7. Tepid souls shall grow fervent.
8. Fervent souls shall quickly mount to high perfection.
9. I will bless every place where a picture of My Heart shall be exposed and honored.
10. I will give to priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts.
11. Those who shall promote this devotion shall have their names written in My Heart, never to be blotted out.

## AN ACT OF REPARATION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

ADORABLE Heart of Jesus, glowing with love for us and inflamed with zeal for our salvation; O Heart, ever sensible of our misery and the wretchedness to which our sins have reduced us, infinitely rich in mercy to heal the wounds of our souls, behold us humbly prostrate before Thee to express the sorrow that fills our hearts for the coldness and indifference with which we have so long requited the numberless benefits that Thou hast conferred upon us. With a deep sense of the offences that have been heaped upon Thee by our sins and the sins of others, we come to make a solemn reparation of honor to Thy most sacred Majesty. It was our sins that overwhelmed Thy Heart with bitterness; it was the weight of our iniquities that pressed down thy Face to the earth in the Garden of Olives, and caused Thee to expire in anguish and agony on the Cross. But now repenting and sorrowful, we cast ourselves at Thy feet, and implore forgiveness. Adorable Heart of Jesus, source of true contrition and ever merciful to the penitent sinner, impart to our hearts the spirit of penance, and give to our eyes a fountain of tears, that we may sincerely bewail our sins now and for the rest of our days. Oh, would that we could blot them out, even with our blood! Pardon them, O Lord, in Thy mercy, and pardon and convert to Thee all that have committed irreverences and sacrileges against Thee in the Sacrament of Thy love, and thus give another proof that Thy mercy is above all Thy works. Divine Jesus, with Thee there is mercy and plentiful redemption: deliver us from our sins, accept the sincere desire we now entertain, and our holy resolution, relying on the assistance of Thy grace, henceforth to be faithful to Thee. And in order to make reparation for the sins of ingratitude by which we have grieved Thy most tender and loving Heart, we are resolved in the future ever to love and honor Thee in the most holy Sacrament of the altar, where

Thou art ever present to hear and grant our petitions, and to be the food and life of our souls. Be Thou, O compassionate Jesus, our Mediator with Thy Heavenly Father, Whom we have so grievously offended, strengthen our weakness, confirm these our resolutions of amendment, and as Thy Sacred Heart is our refuge and our hope when we have sinned, so may it be the strength and support of our repentance, that nothing in life or death may ever again separate us from Thee. Amen.

## PRAYER TO THE SACRED HEART

WITH Mary Immaculate, let us adore, and thank, and beseech, and console the most sacred and lovable Eucharistic Heart of Jesus.

Indulgence of 200 days.

Plenary Indulgence under the usual conditions on the feast of the Immaculate Conception if throughout the whole of the preceding year this prayer has been said.

## ACT OF CONSECRATION

## TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

MOST sweet Jesus, Redeemer of the human race, look down upon us, humbly prostrate before Thy altar. We are Thine and Thine we wish to be: but to be more surely united with Thee, behold each one of us freely consecrates himself today to Thy most Sacred Heart. Many indeed have never known Thee: many too, despising Thy precepts, have rejected Thee. Have mercy on them all, most merciful Jesus, and draw them to Thy Sacred Heart. Be Thou King, O Lord, not only of the faithful who have never forsaken Thee, but also of the prodigal children who have abandoned Thee: grant that they may quickly return to their Father's house, lest they die of wretchedness and hunger. Be Thou King of all those who are still involved in the darkness of idolatry or of Islamism, and refuse not to draw them all into the light and kingdom of God. Turn Thine eyes of mercy toward the children of that race, once Thy chosen people. Of old they called down upon themselves the blood of the Savior; may it now descend upon them a laver of redemption and of life. Grant, O Lord, to Thy Church assurance of freedom and immunity from harm: give peace and order to all nations, and make the earth resound from pole to pole with one cry: Praise to the divine Heart that wrought our salvation: to it be glory and honor forever. Amen.

*A Prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament*, page 49.

*Litany of the Sacred Heart*, page 11.

### INVOCATIONS

Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto Thine.

**Indulgence of 300 days.**

O Heart of Jesus, burning with love of us, inflame our hearts with love of Thee.

**Indulgence of 100 days, once a day.**

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, be Thou known, loved, and imitated.

**Indulgence of 300 days, once a day.**

Sweet Heart of Jesus, be my love.

**Indulgence of 300 days.**

O Heart of Jesus, may I love Thee and make Thee to be loved.

**Indulgence of 300 days.**

## Act of Reparation to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament

My Lord Jesus Christ, who, for the love Thou bearest to men, dost remain night and day in this Sacrament, full of compassion and of love, awaiting, calling, and welcoming all who come to visit Thee: I believe that Thou art present in the Sacrament of the altar: I adore Thee from the abyss of my nothingness. I thank Thee for all the graces Thou hast hitherto bestowed upon me, in particular for having given me Thyself in this Sacrament, for having given me Thy most holy Mother Mary as my advocate, and for having called me to visit Thee in this church. I now salute thy most loving Heart, and this for three ends: 1. In thanksgiving for this great gift. 2. To make amends to Thee for all the insults which Thou hast received in this Sacrament from all Thine enemies. 3. I intend, by this visit, to adore Thee in all the places on earth in which Thou art present in this Sacrament, and in which Thou art the least revered and the most abandoned. My Jesus, I love Thee with my whole heart. I grieve for having so often offended Thy infinite goodness. I purpose, with the help of Thy grace, nevermore to offend Thee. And now, miserable and unworthy though I be, I consecrate myself to Thee without reserve. I give Thee and renounce my entire will, my affections, my desires, and all that I possess. Henceforth dispose of me and of all that I have, as Thou pleasest. All that I ask of Thee and desire is Thy holy love, final perseverance, and the perfect accomplishment of Thy will. I recommend to Thee the souls in purgatory, especially those who had the greatest devotion to the most Blessed Sacrament and to the most Blessed Virgin Mary. I also recommend to Thee all poor sinners. In fine, my dear Savior, I unite all my affections with the affections of Thy most loving Heart, and I offer them, thus united, to Thy eternal Father, and beseech Him, in Thy name, to vouchsafe, for Thy love, to accept and grant them. Amen.—ST. ALPHONSUS

## ACT OF REPARATION AND EJACULATION

JESUS, My God, my Savior, true God and true Man, in that lowly homage with which the faith itself inspires me, with my whole heart I adore and love Thee in the most august Sacrament of the Altar, in reparation for all the acts of irreverence, profanation and sacrilege, which I myself may ever have been so unhappy as to have committed, as well as for all such like acts that ever have been done by others, or that may be done in ages yet to come. I adore Thee, my God, not indeed as Thou deservest, nor as much as I am bound to adore, but as far as I am able; and I would that I could adore Thee with all the perfection of which a reasonable creature is capable. Meantime I purpose now and ever to adore Thee, not only for those Catholics who adore and love Thee not, but also for the conversion of all bad Christians, and of all Heretics, Schismatics, Mohammedans, Jews and idolaters. Jesus, my God, mayest Thou be ever known, adored, loved and praised every moment, in the most holy and divine Sacrament. Amen.

I adore Thee every moment, O living Bread of Heaven, great Sacrament! Jesus, treasure of Mary's heart, I pray Thee send Thy blessing on my soul.

Holiest Jesu! loving Savior! I give Thee my heart.

Indulgence, 200 days T. Q. Pius VII, Jan. 21, 1815.

*Hymns in honor of the Blessed Sacrament.* See Table of Contents.

*Litany of the Holy Name or of the Sacred Heart,* pages 7 and 11.

*Short readings out of the Gospel, the Following of Christ, Book IV, or any good book on the Holy Eucharist.*

# CONSIDERATIONS FOR VISITS TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

## *Jesus in the Gospel.*

*In order to give variety to your devotion and make the presence of Our Lord in the Tabernacle more real and definite to your mind, you may consider Jesus each day, in one of the many circumstances of His life related in the Gospel.*

### 1. The Incarnation

"ET VERBUM CARO FACTUM EST" *(John i. 14)*

"SACRIFICE and oblation Thou wouldst not: but a body Thou hast fitted to me. Holocausts for sin did not please Thee. Then I said: Behold I come (Hebr. x. 5-7). From the splendor of Heaven the Son of God came down to this poor world of ours: "*descendit de cœlis.*" From the bosom of His almighty and eternal Father He passed into a weak and mortal form: "*Et incarnatus est.*" Since, in spite of the deceitful promise of the father of lies to our first parents, we could not become "like unto God," through the medium of a humble Virgin, God made Himself like unto us: "*Et homo factus est.*" To raise us from our fallen state, He lowered Himself unto our misery: "*Exinanivit semetipsum*"; to show us the way to our heavenly inheritance, He consented to dwell among us: "*Et habitavit in nobis.*"

Then, at the end of His sojourn on earth, in His infinite love for men, Jesus hid even His human form under the species of bread and wine, in order to remain with us to the end of time: "*Ecce ego vobiscum* *sum omnibus diebus, usque ad consummationem sæculi.''*

*Acts of faith, adoration, thanksgiving.*

Christ, my Lord and Master, began the work of our salvation in humility and self-abasement: do I, His servant and disciple, try to continue it in the same spirit? Do I not sometimes desire and seek from my sacred character and functions a glory which is due to God alone?

*Examination of conscience—Act of contrition—Resolutions—Prayer for the spirit of humility.*

*''Verbum supernum prodiens,''* page 78. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 2. BETHLEHEM

### ''RECLINAVIT EUM IN PRÆSEPIO'' *(Luke ii. 7)*

''AND she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped Him up in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger: because there was no room for them in the inn.'' Conceived in humility Jesus was born in poverty, to teach us, from the very beginning of His life on earth, not to attach ourselves to the perishable goods of this world, but to turn our minds and hearts towards the eternal blessings of Heaven: *''Quæ sursum sunt quærite, non quæ super terram.''*

''And there were in the same country shepherds watching, and keeping the night-watches over their flock. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the brightness of God shone round about them, and they feared with a great fear. And the angel said to them: 'Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, . . . for this day is born to you a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord.' . . . And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God, and saying: 'Glory to God in the highest. and on earth *peace to men of good will'.*"

The humble and the poor were first called to see and adore their God born in poverty, and they were to be, later, the first object of his care: *"Misit me evangelizare pauperibus."* To them was the glory of Heaven first manifested, and the Kingdom of God first revealed: *"Beati pauperes spiritu, quoniam ipsorum est regnum cœlorum."*

Do I understand the lesson which Jesus taught me from His birth? Do I feel and cherish any inordinate attachment to earthly goods? Do I desire and seek them immoderately? Do I prize them more, at times, than even heavenly blessings? Do I never sacrifice to them the interests of my own soul and of the souls intrusted to me?

*Examination of conscience—Contrition—Resolutions—Prayer for the spirit of poverty.*

*"Ave verum corpus,"* page 87. *Prayer to the Infant Jesus,* page 35. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 3. JERUSALEM—THE PRESENTATION

"TULERUNT EUM IN JERUSALEM, UT SISTERENT EUM DOMINO" *(Luke iii. 22)*

"AND after the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they carried Him to Jerusalem, to present Him to the Lord . . . and to offer a sacrifice according as it is written in the law of the Lord. . . ." From the very dawn of His mortal life, Jesus clearly showed that He had not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. Was not the supreme Lawgiver exempt, by nature and right, from the prescriptions of a law framed for sinful man? Was the spotless Lamb of God, who had come to redeem us with His own blood, to be redeemed, like the children of Adam, with the blood of animals? Yet Jesus did not hesitate to obey a law which was not meant for Him. He suffered Himself to be brought to the Temple by His parents; there He was offered to God, and offered Himself as a victim for our salvation: *"Oblatus est quia ipse voluit"*; and while the altar was being sprinkled with the blood of the innocent doves, He had the vision of Golgotha and of his own innocent Body bleeding on the Cross to wash away our sins: *"Factus obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis."*

*Acts of adoration, praise, and gratitude.*

With such an example then set before my eyes, and even now, every morning, when Jesus answers my call, and comes into my hands, *"factus obediens,"* to renew on the altar His offering of infinite price, can I ever hesitate to obey, not only the laws of God and of His Church, as a faithful disciple of Christ, but also the orders and directions of my ecclesiastical superiors, as a priest worthy of his Christlike character and of his sacred office, whatever may be the sacrifice which obedience, at times, demands of me?

Am I never inclined, by a false interpretation of my exalted position, and by constant exercise of authority as a ruler of souls, to lose sight of certain duties which obedience imposes upon me also?

*Examination of conscience—Contrition—Resolutions—Prayer for the spirit of obedience, and for courage and generosity in accepting beforehand the sacrifices required of me for the entire fulfilment of my priestly obligations.*

"*Sacris solemniis,*" page 81. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 4. NAZARETH—HIDDEN LIFE

### "HABITAVIT IN CIVITATE QUAE VOCATUR NAZARETH"

*(Matt. ii. 23)*

"AND coming [from Egypt] He dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was said by the prophets: That He shall be called a Nazarene" (Matt. ii. 23).

"And the Child grew, and waxed strong, full of wisdom: and the grace of God was in Him. . . . And He went down with them [from Jerusalem], and came to Nazareth: and was subject to them. . . . And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age, and grace with God and men" (Luke ii. 40, 51).

With the journey to Jerusalem and the three days in the Temple, this is all we know concerning Jesus' life for a long period of thirty years. A quiet country town with low houses, narrow streets, a well, and a Synagogue; a humble home and a carpenter's shop: this is the setting. Mary, the purest of virgins and the most tender of all mothers; Joseph, *vir justus*, a most faithful and devoted guardian; Jesus, the most amiable and most truly beautiful, the most loving and obedient of the children of men: this is the Family which played such a part in the history and destiny of mankind. Theirs indeed was a *hidden* life, spent in work, prayer, and mutual love, unknown to men but admired by angels, and most pleasing to God. It was there and thus that the salvation of the world was prepared; and now it is continued here, in the silence and solitude of the Tabernacle, where Jesus' presence is still more concealed to human eyes than it was at Nazareth.

*Acts of adoration, admiration, and love.*

Do I understand the beauty and appreciate the meritorious value of a priest's life hidden near Jesus in the Tabernacle, in union with Mary and Joseph? Do I love it, and do I gladly return to it after fulfilling outside the duties of my office? For although I must say, like Jesus to His Mother: "*In his quæ Patris mei sunt oportet me esse,*" it is, however, in the solitude of my home and of my church that, through prayer, reflection, and study, I can grow in wisdom and grace, and thus prepare efficiently to fulfill my mission.

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer for a life of union with Jesus at Nazareth and in the Tabernacle, in the preparation and discharge of my daily duties.*

*Jesu dulcis memoria*, page 87. *Prayer for special intentions.*

### 5. JESUS IN THE TEMPLE WITH THE DOCTORS

"INVENERUNT ILLUM IN TEMPLO, SEDENTEM IN MEDIO DOCTORUM" *(Luke ii. 46)*

"AND it came to pass, that after three days they found Him in the Temple sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions.

And all that heard Him were astonished at His wisdom and His answers. And seeing Him, they wondered'' (Luke ii. 46-48). A beautiful scene from which I can derive a precious lesson. Jesus "was the true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world''; yet, there He stood, in the midst of men of finite minds and very limited knowledge, condescending to seek from them the truth which He alone could teach.

*Acts of adoration, admiration, and praise.*

I am one of those to whom He said: "You are the light of the world.'' What care do I take, what zeal do I show to make the light of heavenly doctrine shine in my own mind, by constant and earnest application to study, before I attempt to make it shine before men? Am I not too easily satisfied with the scant knowledge I have thus far acquired?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer for the love of study.*

*Veni Creator Spiritus*, page 90. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 6. JESUS LEAVES NAZARETH

"VENIT JESUS A NAZARETH GALILAEAE'' *(Mark i. 9)*

"AND it came to pass, in those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan'' (Mark i. 9). "And Jesus Himself was beginning about the age of thirty years'' (Luke iii. 23). After many years of preparation, spent in prayer, humble work, and self-sacrifice, Jesus knows that the hour has come when He must manifest Himself to the world, and enter upon the great mission which He has accepted. Then in full possession of His perfect manhood, He leaves the peaceful scene of His childhood and youth, the poor yet happy home sanctified by His presence, and the holy Mother whom He loves so truly and dearly. Can I believe that Jesus did not feel in His Heart the pangs of separation, knowing that He had a truly human Heart, most loving and most tender? Besides, Our Lord, who had come to suffer for us in His Soul and Body, would not have spared Himself this sorrow, a fit beginning for a ministry which was to cost Him so many hardships and sacrifices. But duty called Him, and He went forth, without hesitation, to perform the great task of our redemption. "*In his quæ Patris mei sunt oportet me esse.*" He who was to say that whosoever does not leave father or mother, brothers or sisters, to follow after Him, is not worthy of Him, first gave us the example of courageous and generous parting.

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, love.*

Do I share in Jesus' courage and generosity to answer the sacred call of my priestly office in its entirety? Do I never allow attachment to home and relatives to interfere with the duties of my ministry?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*Pange lingua gloriosi,* page 79. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 7. JESUS IN THE DESERT

"DUCTUS EST IN DESERTUM UT TENTARETUR A DIABOLO" *(Matt. iv. 1)*

"AND immediately the Spirit drove Him out into the desert. And He was in the desert forty days, and forty nights: and was tempted by Satan, and He was with beasts, and the angels ministered to Him'' (Mark i. 12-13).

Alone in the silent and dreary solitude of the desert, kneeling in fervent prayer before His Heavenly Father, mortifying His body by an uninterrupted fast of forty days, Jesus was thus preparing His first signal victory and His final triumph over Satan. Then the tempter came and tried, but in vain, to inject the deadly poison of pride into His mind, and to seduce Him by the allurements of wealth and ambition, in order to ruin His work from the start. What disastrous consequences would have followed for us, if he had succeeded! ''Show Thy power,'' he said, ''work miracles, change these stones into bread; cast Thyself down from the pinnacle of the Temple; acknowledge my sway, and thou shalt receive from me all the kingdoms of the earth.''

''Be gone, Satan,'' was Christ's answer. ''Then the devil left Him: and behold angels came and ministered to Him'' (Matt. iv. 11). Thus was the world saved through Jesus' humility, prayer, and penance.

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, and love.*

Are these the means I use in trying to save souls, after the example of my divine Master? Do I also realize that a priest is not alone concerned in the outcome of the temptations which may assail him, but that many who depend on him for guidance and support, must necessarily share in his victories or in his defeats? Do I prepare to resist temptation by fostering in myself the spirit of prayer and mortification?

*Examination of conscience—Contrition—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*Adoro te devote*, page 76. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 8. THE LAMB OF GOD

### "ECCE AGNUS DEI" *(John i. 29)*

BEHOLD Jesus walking alone on the bank of the Jordan, with simple dignity. His bearing and countenance reflect such meekness and kindness that John the Baptist, seeing Him as He approaches, says to the two disciples who stand with him: "Behold the Lamb of God." And immediately the two disciples follow Jesus, irresistibly attracted by the great power of that meekness and kindness which has since drawn millions of men to the gentle Savior.

*Acts of adoration, praise, and love.*

Jesus wants me to use that same power to lead souls to Him; I can now hear Him say to me from the Tabernacle, as He once said to His Disciples: "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart"; "Blessed are the meek: for they shall possess the land."

Do I sufficiently understand the power of meekness and kindness in dealing with souls? If I am meek and kind by temperament, do I try, by means of the spirit of faith, to turn this natural disposition into a Christian virtue? Do I use it to conquer souls for Christ? If I am naturally prone to impatience, harshness or excessive severity in speech and manners, do I make the necessary efforts to check, weaken, and finally extirpate those defects which, when noticed in Christ's ministers, have too often kept heretics out of the true fold, and driven Catholics away from the practice of their religious duties?

*Examination of conscience—Contrition—Resolutions—Prayer for the spirit of meekness.*

*Jesu, Rex admirabilis,* page 88. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 9. JESUS CALLING HIS FIRST DISCIPLES

### "VENITE POST ME"

"AND Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the sea (for they were fishers). And He saith to them: 'Come ye after Me, and I will make you to be fishers of men.' And they immediately leaving their nets, followed Him. And going on from thence, He saw other two brethren, James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets: and He called them. And they forthwith left their nets and father, and followed Him" (Matt. iv. 18-22).

Later, "Jesus saw a man sitting in the custom-house, named Matthew; and He saith to him: 'Follow Me.' And he arose up and followed Him" (Matt. ix. 9). How prompt and generous was their answer to the Master's call! They asked no questions as to whither He would lead them, and what He would require of them; they expressed no fear as to the future, they were actuated by no selfish motives. They left all that was dear to them, and followed Jesus with simple and perfect confidence.

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, and love.*

What were my dispositions when I heard the Master's call? What are they now? Am I following Him with the readiness, generosity, disinterestedness, and childlike confidence of the first disciples? Do I willingly and sincerely give up everything which nature has made dear to me, to devote myself entirely to His service? Do I never look backward with regret? Do I never look forward with fear?

*Examination of conscience—Sincere renewal of my clerical consecration:* "Dominus pars hereditatis meæ, et calicis mei: tu es qui restitues hereditatem meam mihi."

*Resolutions—Prayer for generosity and perfect confidence.*

*Jesus decus angelicum,* page 89. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 10. JESUS PREACHING

### "ET ERAT PRÆDICANS"

"AND rising very early, going out He went into a desert place: and there He prayed. And Simon and they that were with Him followed after Him. And when they had found Him, they said to Him; 'All seek for Thee.' And He saith to them: 'Let us go into the neighboring towns and cities, that I may preach there also: for to this purpose am I come.' And He was preaching in their synagogues, and in all Galilee, and casting out devils" (Mark i. 35-39).

We have Jesus' own testimony that the main purpose of His mission was to make divine truth known to men, before He washed away their sins in His Blood. Such was also the task He intrusted to His Apostles: "*Euntes ergo in universum mundum,* *prædicate Evangelium omni creaturæ.*" But we know that Jesus prayed before He preached; we know that He did not wait for the people to come to Him, but went out to seek them.

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, praise, and love.*

Do I clearly realize the extent and importance of my duties as a herald of God's word? What zeal do I display to make divine truth known even to those who do not seek it? With what care do I prepare the food of the heavenly doctrine, so as to make it not only substantial, but also attractive and easy to assimilate? Am I convinced that the "*verbum vitæ,*" when uttered by a man, even though he be a priest, is bound to remain sterile if not accompanied and rendered fruitful by the power of God's grace, that the seed cannot grow unless it is quickened by the heavenly dew? Do I pray before preaching?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.* *O Sacrum Convivium,* page 54. *O quam suavis est,* page 54. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 11. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

### "BEATI"

"AND seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain, and when He was set down, His Disciples came unto Him. And opening His mouth He taught them, saying: Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek: for they shall possess the land. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice: for they shall have their fill. Blessed are the merciful:

for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you, untruly, for My sake: Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in Heaven" (Matt. 1-12).

Blessed also are these divine words never heard before, bringing light to troubled minds, strength to weak and wavering wills, and consolation to afflicted hearts, setting forever the standard of Christian happiness here below, as a preparation to everlasting bliss. How different they are from human and worldly ideals! I can now hear Jesus addressing to me alone, from His Tabernacle, this same sublime and unchanging message which He then delivered to the multitudes on the slope of the mountain.

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, and love.*

To what extent has my life, to this day, been influenced and guided by the principles of the Beatitudes? Has not my standard of happiness often been too human?

*Examination of conscience on each Beatitude—Contrition—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*Lauda Sion Salvatorem*, page 83. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 12. JESUS HEALING THE SICK

### "ET CURAVIT EOS"

"AND when He had entered into Capharnaum, there came to Him a centurion, beseeching Him, and saying: 'Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, and is grievously tormented.' And Jesus saith to him: 'I will come and heal him.' And the centurion, making answer, said: 'Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant shall be healed.'" And Jesus, praising his faith, rewarded at once his confident and humble prayer: "'Go, and as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee.' And his servant was healed at the same hour" (Matt. viii. 5-14). "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us," cried the ten lepers. "Whom when He saw, He said: 'Go, show yourselves to the priests.' And it came to pass, as they went, they were made clean" (Luke xvii. 12-20). As He was leaving Jericho, two blind men cried out, saying: "'O Lord, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us.' And Jesus having compassion on them, touched their eyes. And immediately they saw, and followed Him" (Matt. xx. 34). "And there came to Him great multitudes, having with them the dumb, the blind, the lame, the maimed, and many others: and they cast them down at His feet, and He healed them" (Matt. xv. 29-31).

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, and love.*

To what extent do I share in Jesus' compassion and tender solicitude for the sick and the afflicted? What zeal do I show in visiting those intrusted to my care, to bring them help and sympathy, to impart to them the consolations of our holy Faith, and prepare the dying for life eternal? Do I often remember them in my prayers?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*Verbum supernum,* page 78. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 13. Jesus Forgiving Sins

### "REMITTUNTUR TIBI PECCATA TUA"

Behold the sinful woman as she humbly kneels before the divine Master, washing His feet with her tears, the token of her repentance, and anointing them with fragrant ointment, the symbol of her love. To the Pharisee, surprised and scandalized because he knew that she was a sinner, Jesus declared: "'Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much.' And He said to her: 'Thy sins are forgiven thee' " (Luke vii. 36, 50). When the Scribes and Pharisees brought unto Him a woman taken in adultery, and asked Him whether she ought not to be stoned according to the law of Moses, Jesus answered: " 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.' Then He said to the woman: 'Hath no man condemned thee?' Who said: 'No man, Lord.' And Jesus said: 'Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and now sin no more' " (John vii. 1-11). Jesus had not come to condemn sinners, but to save them; He did not want their death, but their conversion.

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, and love.*

To me, his priest, Jesus has intrusted the ministry of mercy and forgiveness; He has commissioned me to say to each repentant sinner kneeling at my feet: "Thy sins are forgiven thee." Do I share in His compassion for sinful souls and in His zeal for their conversion? Do I seek the wandering sheep and earnestly try to bring them back to the fold? Am I always ready to welcome them, when they come to me? Do I treat them with tender mercy, as the divine Shepherd did? Do I often pray for them?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer. Miserere mei Deus. Prayer for special intentions.*

## 14—THE GOOD SHEPHERD

"EGO SUM PASTOR BONUS"

"I AM the Good Shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. But the hireling, and he that is not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming and leaveth the sheep, and flieth: and the wolf catcheth and scattereth the sheep: and the hireling flieth, because he is a hireling; and he has no care for the sheep. I am the Good Shepherd; and I know Mine, and Mine know Me . . . and I lay down My life for My sheep. And other sheep I have, that are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John x. 11-17).

The Good Shepherd, having laid down His life for His flock, is no longer present with us in a visible form. He is indeed really present here, in the tabernacle; but no human eyes can see Him. This is why He now asks me, his priest, to lend Him my soul and body, that human nature which, for our sake, He submitted to suffering and death in His adorable Person, that in me the Good Shepherd may still be seen by His sheep, and call each one of them by his name, and lead them to the pastures where they can eat the food which gives eternal life.

*Acts of adoration, admiration, gratitude, love.*

Do I readily comply with the desire of the divine Master? Am I truly a good shepherd? Do I know my sheep? Do I safely lead them to God by word and example? Do I lay down my life for them drop by drop, every day? Do I devote my time, my strength, all the powers of my soul and body to the care of my flock? What zeal do I display to bring back to the fold the sheep that have wandered away through their own fault, and those that have been led astray by false shepherds?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*Sacris solemniis*, page 81. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 15. JESUS AT BETHANY

### "MAGISTER ADEST, ET VOCAT TE"

THE Evangelists have recorded two beautiful scenes in which we see Jesus at the home of His friends, in the little town of Bethany.

1. *Jesus visiting Martha and Mary.* While Martha was "busy about much serving," Mary was "sitting at the Lord's feet, *and* heard His word." Martha complained that Mary left her alone to serve. "And the Lord, answering, said to her: 'Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and art troubled about many things. But one thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her.' " (Luke x. 38-42).

2. *The Raising of Lazarus.* Jesus receives the message of the two sisters: "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick." Jesus arrives at Bethany. Martha expresses confidence in His friendship, and faith in His power: " 'Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But now also I know that whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee.' Jesus says to her: 'Thy brother shall rise

again. . . . *I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me although he be dead, shall live: and every one that liveth, and believeth in Me, shall not die for ever.'"* Then He follows Martha and Mary to the grave; and on seeing the place where His friend was lying in death, Jesus weeps. "The Jews therefore said: 'Behold how He loved him.'" Yes, He loved him to the point of using in his favor His supreme power as life's Creator and Lord. "He cried out with a loud voice: 'Lazarus, come forth.' And presently he that had been dead came forth" (John xi. 1-46).

*Acts of adoration, admiration, gratitude, and love.*

"*Magister adest et vocat te.*" From His Tabernacle He calls me, every day: do I like to kneel or sit at His feet, like Mary at Bethany? Do I like to listen to the words He silently speaks to my soul? Do I seek near Him comfort and courage, in my sorrows and troubles? Are my visits to my friends disinterested and unselfish, like those of Jesus at Bethany? Do I bring them help and consolation in their trials? When I am in their midst, do I never forget nor allow them to forget that, if I am their friend, I am also and above all a priest of Jesus Christ?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*Jesu dulcis memoria,* page 87. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 16. JESUS FEEDING THE MULTITUDES

### "MANDUCAVERUNT OMNES, ET SATURATI SUNT"

"JESUS retired into a desert place apart, and the multitudes having heard of it, followed Him on foot out of the cities.'' Jesus had compassion on them, and healed their sick. And when it was evening, the Disciples asked their Master to dismiss the crowds, that they might go to the towns and buy food. ''But Jesus said to them: 'They have no need to go; give you them to eat.' '' And the five loaves and the two fishes which He blessed were more than sufficient to feed five thousand men, besides women and children. (Matt. xvi. 13-21).

When, the next day, the multitude sought Him, hoping to see the great miracle renewed, Jesus said to them: ''I am the Bread of Life: he that cometh to Me shall not hunger. . . . If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever. . . . He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me, and I in him'' (John vi. 35-60).

He who had fed the bodies of His followers, in such a marvelous manner, provided nourishment for their souls also, when, before leaving them, ''Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke, and gave to His disciples, and said: 'This is My Body' '' (Matt. xxvi. 26). Through the wonderful power which He has intrusted to me, the great miracle is renewed, every day, and from my hands the souls of the multitudes receive the Bread of Heaven for life eternal. ''*Panis angelicus fit panis hominum.*''

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, and love.*

Do I now feel the greatness and sacredness of the sacrificial function which I perform, every morning, at the altar, as vividly as I did on the never-to-be-forgotten day of my First Mass? Has not my realization of its value and divine character been weakened, instead of being intensified, by the frequent repetition of this wonderful action? Can I sincerely bear testimony to myself that I spare no effort to bring my people to Holy Communion, to make them understand this most important act of their Christian life, and to enable them to profit by it?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*Pange lingua gloriosi,* page 79. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 17. THE STILLING OF THE TEMPEST

### "ET FACTA EST TRANQUILLITAS MAGNA"

"AND when He entered into the boat, His Disciples followed Him: and behold a great tempest arose in the sea, so that the boat was covered with waves, but He was asleep. And they came to Him, and awaked Him, saying: 'Lord, save us, we perish.' And Jesus saith to them: 'Why are you fearful, O ye of little faith?' Then rising up He commanded the winds, and the sea, and there came a great calm" (Matt. viii. 23-28).

Jesus present here in the Tabernacle, under the veil of the sacred species, is apparently asleep; yet I know that He is watching for me and over me: "*Ego dormio, sed cor meum vigilat.*" When the storm of temptation, discouragement, wounded pride, anger and resentment arises in my soul, I know that if I call to Him like the Apostles, saying: "Lord, save me, I perish," He will command the winds and waves that sweep over my heart, and there will come a great calm. For He is now as kind and mighty as He was on the Lake of Genesareth. All that He requires of me is faith in His power and confidence in His kindness.

*Acts of adoration, admiration, gratitude, and love.*

Do I come to Jesus, with childlike confidence, at the hour of trouble and temptation? Do I not deserve, at times, to hear Him say to me as He did to His Apostles: "Why are you fearful, O ye of little faith"? "*Domine, adauge mihi fidem.*"

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*Adoro te devote,* page 76. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 18. THE TRANSFIGURATION

### "BONUM EST NOS HIC ESSE"

ON THE summit of Mount Thabor, I see Jesus kneeling and absorbed in prayer; a few feet away, three of his disciples, Peter, James, and John, sitting on the rock, more inclined to sleep than to contemplation: "And whilst He prayed, the shape of His countenance was altered, and His raiment became white and glittering. And behold two men were talking with Him. And they were Moses and Elias. . . . But Peter and they that were with Him were heavy with sleep. And waking, they saw His glory, and the two men that stood with Him. And it came to pass that as they were departing from Him, Peter saith to Jesus: 'Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles, one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias'. . . . And as he spoke these things there came a cloud, and overshadowed them, . . . and a voice came out of the cloud, saying: 'This is my beloved Son, hear Him.' And whilst the voice was uttered, Jesus was found alone" (Luke ix. 28-37).

*Acts of adoration and love.*

"*Domine, bonum est nos hic esse.*" Are these words the faithful expression of my sentiments, when I stand at the altar or kneel before the Tabernacle? Do I consider the time of my daily Mass, thanksgiving, and visit to the Blessed Sacrament, as the most precious and happiest moments of the day? If I do not, it is because my faith is too weak to give me a sufficient realization of Jesus' presence on the altar and in the Tabernacle; I must then often pray for an increase of faith: "*Domine, adauge nobis fidem.*" If I value those blessed moments as I ought, I will not be tempted to hurry through the ceremonies and prayers of the Mass, to shorten the time of my thanksgiving and of my daily visit.

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*Jesu rex admirabilis*, page 88. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 19. JESUS ENTERS INTO JERUSALEM

### "BENEDICTUS QUI VENIT IN NOMINE DOMINI"

"*Ecce Rex tuus venit tibi mansuetus.*" He did not come in power and glory, like a conqueror at the head of his army, but in meekness and simplicity, like a gentle lamb, *Agnus Dei*, offering Himself as a victim for the redemption of man. This is why His people received Him, not with fear, but with love. "And they [two of His disciples] brought the colt to Jesus: and they lay their garments on him, and He sat upon him. And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down boughs from the trees, and strewed them in the way. And they that went before and they that followed, cried, saying: 'Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the

Lord' " (Mark xi. 1-11). To-day, "*Hosanna*"; a few days later, "*Crucifigatur*"; Jesus accepts both willingly and gratefully; for, in His merciful designs, both must work for God's glory and man's salvation.

*Acts of adoration, praise, and love.*

Do I equally accept, as permitted by God for the same sacred end, both the honor which surrounds my priestly character and office, and the humiliations, sufferings, and trials which, at times, may be my lot? Am I equally grateful for the "*Hosanna*" and the "*Crucifigatur*"? Do I consider both as means which God Himself provides, in His infinite wisdom, for the success of the work He has intrusted to me? This is a sure test of my generosity and self-devotion in the service of God and souls.

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer. Lauda Sion Salvatorem*, page 83. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 20. THE LAST SUPPER

### "IN FINEM DILEXIT EOS"

"BEFORE the festival day of the Pasch, Jesus knowing that His hour was come, that He should pass out of this world to the Father: having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end" (John xiii. 1).

I can easily picture to myself that memorable scene. In a large room with bare walls and simple furniture, Jesus and the Twelve are reclining at table to partake of the ritual meal. The Beloved Disciple is leaning on the Master's breast, while Judas, sombre and silent, and with treason in his heart, rehearses in his troubled mind the ungrateful part he is going to play in the Garden of Olives. Jesus rises for the washing of the feet, the striking symbol of the purity of soul especially required on that solemn occasion. Then, when the meal is over, the greatest of all miracles is performed: "And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke and gave to His Disciples, and said: 'Take ye, and eat: *This is My Body.'* ['Do this for a commemoration of Me'—*Luke*] And taking the chalice He gave thanks and gave to them, saying: 'Drink ye all of this. For this is My Blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins' " (Matt. xxvi. 26-27). Thus, by the institution of the Holy Eucharist and of the Holy Priesthood, the perpetual offering of the sacrifice of Calvary was secured, and heavenly nourishment provided for the human soul.

*Acts of adoration, gratitude and love.*

I am one of those to whom Jesus has intrusted this invaluable treasure, with the sublime office of offering His Body and Blood for the salvation of men, and of distributing to them the Bread of Life that comes down from heaven into my hands as I repeat His sacred words. Great indeed is my dignity, but great also are my obligations, as a minister of the Holy Eucharist: *"Agnoscite quod agitis; imitamini quod tractatis."* Am I now as deeply impressed with these words as I was on the day of my ordination to the Holy Priesthood? With what faith, reverence, devotion, and love do I fulfill my sacred duties towards Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament?

*Examination of conscience—Contrition—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*Sacris solemniis*, page 81. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 21. THE AGONY

### "VIGILATE ET ORATE, UT NON INTRETIS IN TENTATIONEM"

"THEN Jesus came with them into a country place which is called Gethsemani: and He said to His Disciples: 'Sit you here, till I go yonder and pray.' And taking with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, He began to grow sorrowful and to be sad. Then He saith to them: 'My soul is sorrowful even unto death: stay you here, and watch with Me.' And going a little further, He fell upon His face, praying, and saying: 'My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me. Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt'" (Matt. xxvi. 36-40). "And there appeared to Him an angel from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in an agony, He prayed the longer. And His sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground. And when He rose up from prayer, and was come to His Disciples, He found them sleeping for sorrow" (Luke xxii. 42-46). "And He saith to Peter: 'What? Could you not watch one hour with me? Watch ye, and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak'" (Matt. xxvi. 40, 41).

*Acts of adoration, compassion, and love.*

*"Vigilate et orate";* these are words which I should constantly keep in mind, to protect my soul from sin. Jesus Himself watched and prayed, at the hour of trial: am I wiser and stronger than my di-

vine Master? I know well that, if the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. Do I carefully watch to avoid the occasions which would lead me into temptation? Have I recourse to prayer when it steals upon me in spite of my vigilance? I also need the assistance of the Angel of strength and consolation.

Even now, Jesus watches and prays for us in the Tabernacle; and when I kneel in His presence with a mind often drowsy and filled with idle thoughts, I still hear Him say: "Can you not watch one hour with Me?"

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer. Jesu decus angelicum,* page 89. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 22. JESUS BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN

### "JESUS AUTEM TACEBAT"

"BUT they holding Jesus led Him to Caiphas the high-priest, where the scribes and the ancients were assembled. And the chief priests and the whole council sought false witness against Jesus, that they might put Him to death. And they found not, whereas many false witnesses had come in. And last of all there came two false witnesses; and they said: 'This man said, I am able to destroy the Temple of God, and after three days to rebuild it.' And the high-priest rising up, said to Him: 'Answerest thou nothing to the things which these witness against thee?' But Jesus held His peace." (Matt. xxvi. 57-63).

*Acts of adoration, admiration, and love.*

Can I wonder if, at times, I am the victim of slander, of false or distorted reports, when Jesus, innocence itself, had to feel their poisonous sting? How easily He could have silenced His accusers! "*Jesus autem tacebat.*" He said not a word to protect His reputation, not a word to ward off suffering and death. It was only when the high-priest adjured Him, in God's name, to say whether He was the Son of God, that Jesus broke His silence, and answered: "Thou hast said it, "to give testimony to the truth concerning His mission.

How do I bear with calumny, unkind remarks or reports, which affect me personally without injuring my work? Do I remember Jesus before Caiphas? "*Jesus autem tacebat.*"

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer. Improperia*, page 97. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 23. JESUS BEFORE PILATE

### "TU DICIS QUIA REX SUM EGO"

I SEE Jesus standing in the Praetorium before the Roman Proconsul. Behind Him rages an angry mob thirsting for His Blood, and accusing Him. "Pilate therefore said to Him: 'Art Thou the king of the Jews?' Jesus answered: 'My Kingdom is not of this world.' . . . Pilate therefore said to Him: 'Art Thou a king then?' Jesus answered: 'Thou sayest that I am a king' " (John xviii. 33-38).

To the high-priest of the Jews Jesus declared that He was Christ the Son of God; before Caesar's representative He proclaimed His royal dignity and authority, adding: "For this I was born, and for this came I into the world: that I should give testimony to the truth."

Jesus reigns over nature, as is clearly proved by

His many miracles; for centuries past, He has reigned over the minds and hearts of countless multitudes of men conquered by His infinite kindness and mercy; He now reigns eternally over the angels and saints in heaven. Truly Jesus is a King, the King of kings: "Christus vincit, Christus imperat, Christus regnat."

*Acts of adoration, praise, submission, and love.*

Does Jesus reign supreme over my soul? Does He rule, as He should, over my thoughts, affections, desires, and actions? *"Oportet eum regnare!"*

Do I work with the zeal of a faithful and loving subject to make Him reign over those intrusted to my care, and to spread His Kingdom among those who do not acknowledge His royal authority and power? *"Adveniat regnum tuum!"*

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*Vexilla Regis prodeunt*, page 92. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 24. JESUS AND BARABBAS

### "BARABBAM AN JESUM?"

"PILATE said: 'Whom will you that I release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus that is called Christ?' For he knew that for envy they had delivered Him. . . . But the chief priests and ancients persuaded the people, that they should ask Barabbas, and make Jesus away. And the governor answering, said to them: 'Whether will you of the two to be released unto you?' But they said, 'Barabbas.' [Now Barabbas was a robber, John xviii. 40.] Pilate saith to them: 'What shall I do then with Jesus that is called

Christ?' They say all: 'Let Him be crucified'" (Matt. xvii. 15-26).

A few days before, they welcomed Him as the Lord's envoy: "*Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini*"; and now they rank Him below a robber and murderer. A few days before, the walls of the holy city echoed their enthusiastic "Hosanna Filio David"; and now the Praetorium of the Roman Governor resounds with their mad and hateful shouts of "*Crucifigatur.*" Such is human inconstancy, such is man's ingratitude! "Why, what evil has He done?" says Pilate. Nothing but good: He healed the sick, raised the dead, consoled the afflicted, absolved sinners, showed men the way to eternal happiness and glory. Yet, louder and louder resounds the "*Crucifigatur.*"

*Acts of adoration, compassion, reparation, and love.*

When I remember that the Son of God was thus treated by those whom He had come to save, can I complain if, at times, my labor, self-devotion, and self-sacrifice for the good of my people are rewarded with unjust or malignant criticism, cold indifference, or base ingratitude? Do I yield to discouragement, am I inclined to relax from my zealous efforts for the sanctification and salvation of souls, under such trying circumstances? The same divine Master Who then stood before Pilate is now with me here, in the Tabernacle; He can tell me how He felt at that painful moment, and what my own sentiments and conduct ought to be.

*Examination of Conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*Pange lingua gloriosi*, page 93. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 25. PETER'S DENIAL

### "NON NOVI ILLUM"

"AND when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were sitting about it, Peter was in the midst of them. Whom when a certain servant-maid had seen sitting at the light, and had earnestly beheld him, she said: 'This man also was with Him.' But he denied Him, saying: 'Woman, I know Him not.' And after a little while another seeing him, said: 'Thou also art one of them.' But Peter said: 'O man, I am not.' And after the space as it were of one hour, another certain man affirmed, saying: 'Of a truth, this man was also with Him: for he is also a Galilean.' And Peter said: 'Man, I know not what thou sayest.' And immediately as he was yet speaking, the cock crew. And the Lord turning looked on Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, as He said: 'Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice.' And Peter going out wept bitterly" (Luke xxii. 55-63).

*Acts of adoration of Jesus' kindness and mercy, reparation, and love.*

Where are Peter's generous resolutions and sincere promises: "Yea, though I should die with Thee, I will not deny Thee"? On account of his great love for his Master he thought himself strong enough to resist any temptation, and presumptuously went to meet danger: he sat in the midst of Christ's enemies, in full light, for a long time. The voice of a servant-maid was enough to frighten him into denial of his Master: *"I know Him not."* Am I stronger than the prince of the Apostles? Although I sincerely love

Jesus and am firmly determined, like Peter, not to deny Him even indirectly, have I therefore a right to expose myself to the danger of sin? Were not these words spoken to me as well as to the Apostles: "Watch ye, and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" If I have been so unfortunate as to deny Jesus' love by falling into grievous sin, have I imitated Peter's sincere and lasting repentance? *"Quem secutus es errantem, sequere penitentem."*—ST. AUGUSTINE.

*Examination of conscience—Contrition—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*An Act of Reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus,* page 100. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 26. THE WAY OF THE CROSS

### "ET BAJULANS SIBI CRUCEM"

"AND after they had mocked Him, they took off the cloak from Him, and put on Him His own garments, and led Him away to crucify Him. And going out they found a man of Cyrene, name Simon: him they forced to take up His Cross" (Matt. xxvii. 31-32).

"And there followed Him a great multitude of people, and of women who bewailed and lamented Him. But Jesus turning to them, said: 'Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over Me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.' . . . And there were also two malefactors led with Him to be put to death" (Luke xxiii. 27-33).

Rightly had the prophet said of Him: *"Inter sce-*

*leratos reputatus est,*" since He not only walked to Golgotha with two malefactors sentenced to the same cruel and ignominious death, but also carried on His torn and bloody shoulders the sins of the whole human race. Should I wonder that His human strength failed Him, on the way? Yet it was not of His woes, but of ours that He was thinking on that painful journey: "Weep not over Me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."

*Acts of adoration, compassion, gratitude, and love.*

As it was the way of the Cross which, through Christ, made accessible to man salvation and blessedness, so is it now, and so will it be until the end of time; there is no other way to Heaven's bliss and glory: "*Si quis vult post me venire, abneget semetipsum, et tollat crucem suam, et sequatur me.*" Do I follow it willingly, if not with the enthusiasm and love of the saints, at least with the faith and resignation of a true disciple of Christ? Do I teach others to accept the sufferings and trials of this life as the price of eternal reward? Jesus carried the whole burden of that heavy Cross, because He had offered Himself to bear the whole weight of our sins: my share of it is small and light, and made lighter still by the help of divine grace which He merited for me on His way to Calvary. Yet, do I never complain of it or try to avoid it, forgetting that in the cross there is salvation, life, and protection from the enemies of my soul? "*In cruce salus, in cruce vita, in cruce protectio ab hostibus.*"

*Examination of conscience—Contrition—Resolutions.*

*Vexilla Regis prodeunt,* page 92. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 27. THE CRUCIFIXION

### "CRUCIFIXERUNT EUM"

"AND they came to the place that is called Golgotha, which is, the place of Calvary. And they gave Him wine to drink, mingled with gall. And when He had tasted, He would not drink. And after they had crucified Him, they divided His garments, casting lots. . . . And they put over His head His cause written: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then were crucified with Him two thieves: one on the right hand, and one on the left" (Matt. xxvi. 33-39).

Then follow the insults and mockeries of the mob, of the chief priests, scribes, and ancients; the prayer of the good thief and Jesus' merciful answer; the touching scene of Mary and John at the foot of the Cross: "When Jesus therefore had seen His Mother and the Disciple standing, whom He loved, He saith to His Mother: 'Woman, behold thy son.' After that, He saith to the Disciple: 'Behold thy Mother.' And from that hour the Disciple took her to his own" (John xix. 25-28).

In the midst of darkness, which had spread over the earth, Jesus' heart-rending words were heard expressing the unspeakable sufferings of His Body and the anguish of His Soul: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Then the "*Sitio,*" the "*Consummatum est*"; and bowing His head He gave up the ghost.

The sacred Blood, streaming from the wounds of the divine Victim, sent up to the throne of God an infinite tribute of adoration, thanksgiving, and reparation; it raised to Heaven a voice of mighty supplication; it washed away the stain of sin, brought peace and hope to troubled hearts, strength and consolation to all, deliverance and joy to the souls of the departed.

*Acts of adoration, compassion, gratitude, and love.*

Such is the Sacrifice which I offer, every morning, with the same precious fruits. Do I always remember this when I perform this most sacred of my priestly functions? Do I sufficiently realize that, at the altar, I act in the name of Him who was both the Priest and the Victim of the great sacrifice of the Cross? While I willingly offer His Blood, am I not too much inclined to spare my own? What personal sacrifices do I bring to the altar, every day?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer for the spirit of self-sacrifice.*

*Stabat Mater,* page 64. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 28. JESUS IN THE SEPULCHRE

### "ET POSUIT ILLUD IN MONUMENTO SUO NOVO"

"And when it was evening, there came a certain rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate, and asked the Body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded that the Body should be delivered. And Joseph taking the Body, wrapt it up in a clean linen cloth. And laid it in his own new monument, which he had hewed out in a rock. And he rolled a great stone to the door of the monument, and went his way. And there was there Mary Magdalen, and the other Mary sitting over against the sepulchre" (Matt. xxvii. 57-66).

The great work of our Redemption was completed, and there Christ reposed, a bruised, torn, and bloody form, in the stillness of death, on the cold rock of the dark and silent tomb. The Author of life had apparently been conquered by death. Behold the work of sin! Behold also the work of love! for "He loved me and delivered Himself for me" (Galat. ii. 20). For the same reason He now dwells in the darkness and silence of the Tabernacle, not lifeless however, but continually offering for us the merits of his Passion and death.

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, and love.*

Do I like to be here with Our Lord, to watch and pray before Him, like Mary Magdalen and the other Mary sitting over against the sepulchre? Do I try to learn from Him to fear neither death nor the grave, but to accept both as a just punishment for my sins, and even to welcome them as the gate to a better world? Do I often ask of Jesus, not only the grace of a holy and fruitful life, but also the inestimable favor of a happy death?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer for a happy death,* page 34.

*Lustra sex qui jam peregit,* page 95. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 29. THE RESURRECTION

### "RESURREXIT, SICUT DIXIT"

"AND on the first day of the week very early in the morning they came to the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled back from the sepulchre. And going in, they found not the Body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were astonished in their mind at this, behold two men stood by them in shining apparel. And as they were afraid and bowed down their countenance towards the ground, they said unto them: 'Why seek you the living with the dead? He is not here, but is risen'" (Luke xxiv. 1-6).

Then, to dispel all doubt, Jesus Himself appeared to Mary Magdalene, to the two Disciples on their way to Emmaus, to all His Apostles and many Disciples.

*Acts of faith, adoration, and love.*

"*Crucifixus etiam pro nobis, passus et sepultus est. . . . Et ascendit in cœlum.*" "*Nonne hæc oportuit pati Christum, et ita intrare in gloriam suam?*" (Luke xxiv. 26). Suffering, humiliation, anguish of soul were for the sacred humanity of Jesus the gate to eternal glory. The disciple is not above the Master; earthly pleasures and honors cannot lead me to heaven's bliss and glory. This I know well; but am I always guided by this truth in the practice of my daily life? Do I constantly place the interest of my salvation above the goods, pleasures, and vanities of this world? Do I not often seek my own personal satisfaction even in the discharge of my priestly duties? Do I not sometimes shrink from the hardships and troubles connected with the fulfillment of my office, forgetting that those added to my good works make up the money which can buy Heaven for me and for others also?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.* *Victimæ Paschali laudes,* page 97. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 30. JESUS APPEARS TO THE APOSTLES

### "DOMINUS MEUS, ET DEUS MEUS"

"AT LENGTH He appeared to the Eleven as they were at table: and He upbraided them with their incredulity and hardness of heart, because they did not believe them who had seen Him after He was risen again" (Mark xvi. 14).

"Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, who is called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other Disciples therefore said to him: 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them: 'Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my fingers into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.' And after eight days, again His Disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said: 'Peace be to you.' Then he saith to Thomas: 'Put in thy finger hither, and see My hands, and bring hither thy hand and put it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing.' Thomas answered, and said to Him: 'My Lord, and my God.' Jesus saith to him: 'Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed'" (John xx. 24-30).

*Acts of faith, adoration, and love.*

Our Lord is as really present here, in the Tabernacle, as He was among His Apostles. I cannot see Him with my bodily eyes, but I have His word and the authority of His Church as a testimony to His presence among us. I will not then share in Thomas' doubt and say: "Except I shall see . . . I will not believe"; but remembering Jesus' words: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed," I will fall at His feet, with the repentant Apostle, and exclaim: *"Dominus meus, et Deus meus."*

Is my conduct always consistent with my faith? When I enter the sanctuary or the body of the church, do I show by a reverential demeanor that I am conscious of the Lord's presence? Is my attitude at the altar and before the Tabernacle always such as to confirm and increase the faith of the worshippers?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer. Adoro Te devote,* page 76. *Prayer for special intentions.*

## 31. THE ASCENSION

### "ASSUMPTUS EST IN COELUM"

"AND He led them out as far as Bethania: and lifting up His hands He blessed them. And it came to pass, whilst He blessed them, He departed from them, and was carried up to Heaven. And they adoring went back into Jerusalem with great joy (Luke xxiv. 50-53).

The sacred Body of Our Lord did not, as ours will, go back to the earth from which He had taken it, but which could no longer claim it; for its union with the holy Soul of the Redeemer had raised it above the earth to a higher sphere; bound by no earthly ties, nothing could keep it, as a faithful servant of the Soul, from sharing at once in the glory and bliss of its Master.

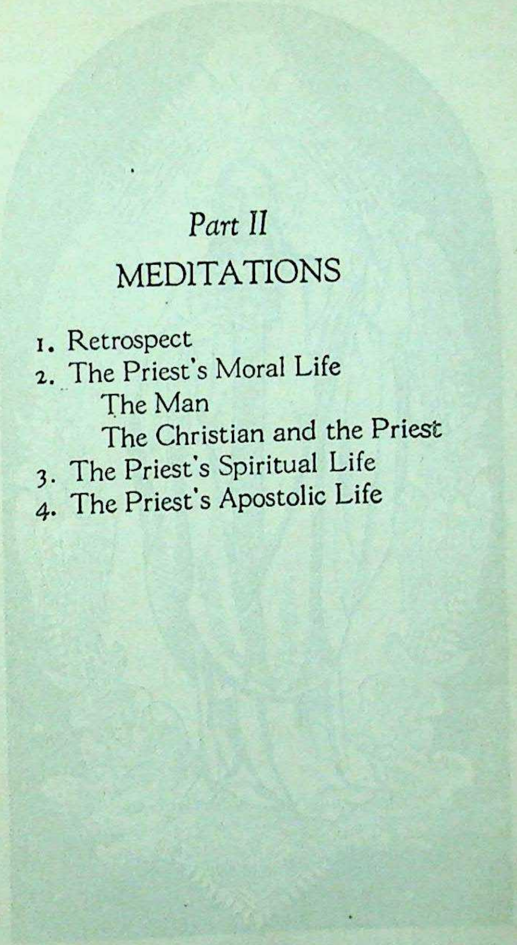
*Acts of adoration, hope, and love.*

Man, being the link between Heaven and earth, by nature belongs to two different worlds: to the material world by his body, and to the spiritual world by his soul. The earth attracts the body and, consequently, the soul intimately united with it; Heaven attracts the soul and, indirectly, the body also. Hence originates an endless struggle between the two elements of which man is composed. If I conquer the inclinations of the material element in me, my soul thus freed from the chains which bind her to earthly things will, one day, fly to the world of the blessed spirits for which it was created, and where my body will later partake of her happiness and glory. Whence can my soul derive greater encouragement and comfort, in her fight for freedom, than from the distant vision of the heavenly reward that awaits her, after the final victory? *"Si labor terret merces invitet."*—ST. AUGUSTINE.

Do I like to keep this blessed vision before my eyes? Do I often seek strength and courage in the thought of Heaven, in the midst of temptations and trials? Do I not rather, at times, look for earthly consolation in the things of this world which are unable to satisfy a heart made for God alone? *"Quæ sursum sunt quærite, non quæ super terram."*

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer: "Ut mentes nostras ad cœlestia desideria erigas, te rogamus audi nos."*

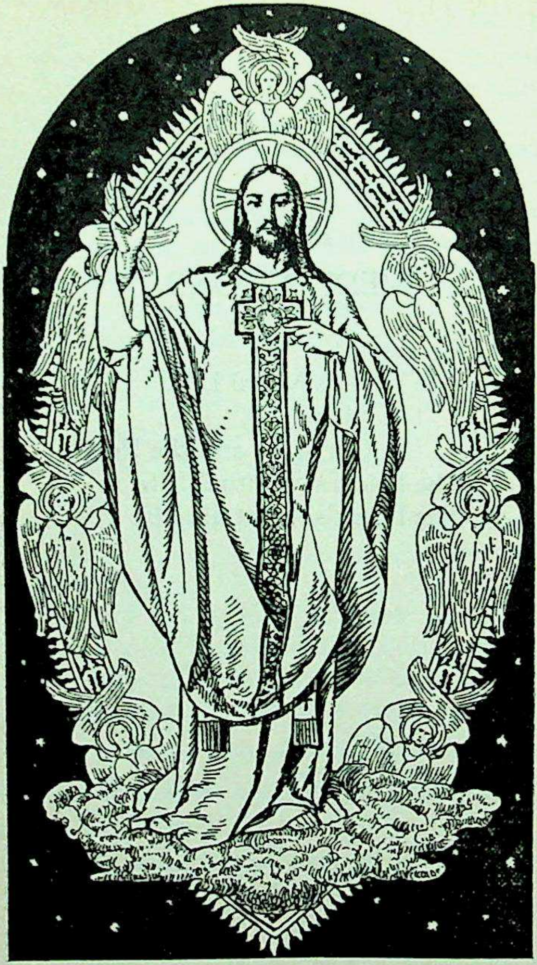
*Salutis humanæ Sator,* page 98. *Prayer for special intentions.*



## *Part II*

# MEDITATIONS

1. Retrospect
2. The Priest's Moral Life
    - The Man
    - The Christian and the Priest
3. The Priest's Spiritual Life
4. The Priest's Apostolic Life



"I will raise Me up a faithful Priest, Who shall do according to My heart and My soul" (*I Kings ii, 35*).

# PIUS X ON THE NECESSITY OF MEDITATION

## *Exhortation to the Catholic Clergy, on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of His Priesthood*

"It is of the first importance that a certain time should be allotted, every day, for meditation on the things of eternity. No priest can omit this without being guilty of serious negligence to the detriment of his soul. . . .

"For august and venerable as are the various offices of the Priesthood, it happens from frequent use that those who have to perform them do not treat them with the proper reverence. Hence, the soul gradually losing its fervor, the way to carelessness is made easy, with consequent distaste for the most sacred things. Then again, the priest is obliged to be in daily intercourse, as it were, in the midst of a wicked people, so that frequently, even in the very performance of his work of pastoral charity, he has reason to fear the secret wiles of the serpent. And are not even religious hearts prone to be soiled by the dust of the world? It is apparent, then, that there exists a great and urgent necessity to return daily to the contemplation of eternal things, that the mind and the will, deriving fresh strength therefrom, may be fortified against all allurements.

"A confirmation, albeit a painful one, of all this is to be found in the lives of those priests who think little of meditation on divine things, or really dislike it. For they are men in whom the sense of Christ, that most estimable gift, languishes; entirely occupied with earthly things, following vanity, babbling of trifles, performing their sacred duties negligently, coldly, perhaps even unworthily!

"Among those who are loath or who neglect 'to consider in their hearts' (Jer. xii. 11) there are some who do not hide their consequent poverty of soul, but rather excuse it on the plea that they are entirely given up to the bustle of ministerial life for the manifold utility of others. But they are miserably deluded. For when priests, not accustomed to converse with God, speak of Him to others, or give counsel on the Christian life, they are utterly destitute of the divine impulse, and their preaching of the Gospel seems to be, as it were, half dead. Their voice, be it ever so rich in prudence and eloquence, bears no resemblance to the voice of the Good Shepherd which the sheep listen to for their salvation; it makes a noise and flows away emptily, and sometimes it is fruitful in bad example, to the shame of religion and the offence of the good. So is it also with other parts of the busy life; they are either altogether without result, or the results are fleeting through lack of that heavenly dew which 'the prayer of him that humbleth himself' (Ecclus. xxxv. 2) calls forth so abundantly.

"There is one special reason which should have much weight in urging us to practice meditation: the wealth of counsel and virtue derived therefrom for that most difficult of all tasks, the proper care of souls. St. Charles, in one of his pastorals, dwells on this in a manner worthy of being remembered: 'Understand, brethren, that nothing is so necessary for all ecclesiastics as mental prayer, preceding, accompanying, and following all our actions. . . . If you administer the Sacraments, O brother, meditate on what you are doing; if you celebrate Mass, meditate on what you are offering; if you are reciting the psalms, meditate to whom you are speaking; if you are engaged in the care of souls, meditate by Whose Blood they have been washed.'

"Finally, there remains one noble incentive worth all the others. For if the priest is called another Christ, and is so by reason of the communication of authority, should he not entirely become so, and be held as such, also by reason of his imitation of the actions of Christ? . . . Let our chief care, therefore, be to meditate on the life of Christ."

Those are the words of the Vicar of Christ, speaking in the name of our Divine Master, the words of one of the most saintly successors of St. Peter, of an experienced and practical man who, before he became the Supreme Head of the Church, had been a Curate, a Pastor, the Spiritual Director and the Rector of a Seminary, a Bishop, and an Archbishop.

# I. *RETROSPECT*

"ADMONEO TE UT RESUSCITES GRATIAM DEI, QUAE EST IN TE PER IMPOSITIONEM MANUUM MEARUM." *(II Tim. 1-6)*

## 1. VOCATION

"RELICTIS RETIBUS ET PATRE, SECUTI SUNT EUM"

### I

"JESUS walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea. And He saith to them: 'Come ye after Me, and I will make you to be fishers of men.' And they immediately leaving their nets, followed Him. And going on from thence, He saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets: and He called them. And they forthwith left their nets and father, and followed Him" (Matt. iv. 18-22).

"He went forth, and saw a publican named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom, and He said to him: 'Follow Me.' And leaving all things, he rose up and followed Him" (Luke v. 27-28).

Neither from among the doctors in Israel, nor from among the members of the wealthy and influential class did Our Lord choose His first Apostles. His kingdom was not of this world, His work of mercy and redemption was to be on a level which human knowledge, wealth, power, and influence could not reach. His grace, even if acting through weak and imperfect instruments, was alone capable of changing man's heart and raising him from the natural to the supernatural order. Jesus therefore called to Himself humble men of the working class who, if not without defects, were, however, righteous and generous; they immediately followed Him, regardless of the sacrifices and hardships which their calling implied: *"Infirma mundi elegit Deus ut confundat fortia."*

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, and love.*

## II

Our Blessed Lord rested His eyes on me also, in the days of my boyhood, and He called me; I heard His voice, either directly in the depth of my heart through the inspiration of His divine grace, or through the medium of a priest, a teacher, a friend. There were other boys around me who seemed to be more worthy than I was of the vocation to the Holy Priesthood, and better fitted for the fulfilment of its duties; yet they were not called, and I was. It is then true that from among countless souls I had been set apart, in God's eternal designs, for the sacred and sublime office of the Priesthood, and had consequently become the object of special care and love from my divine Redeemer: *"Gratias Deo super inenarrabili dono ejus!"* I had not chosen Him, for I had no claim to so great a favor, but He had chosen me out of His infinite kindness and mercy: *"Non vos me elegistis, sed ego elegi vos."* This was for me the first call, however vague and distant it may then have resounded in my soul. Later, as I drew nearer to the altar and came into closer contact with the idea of the Holy Priesthood, I heard God's voice more clearly and more distinctly. "Come and follow Me," He said; "leave your parents, relatives, and friends.

Leave the ambition, hopes, and pleasures of this world to others; I have something better to offer you. From the midst of men immersed in temporal cares and preoccupations, and easily forgetting the one great purpose of life, I call you to a state in which your thoughts, desires, and actions must be directed to things eternal." "*Vocavit me vocatione sua sancta.*" "I choose you as one of My intimate friends, like Peter and John: '*Jam non dicam vos servos, sed amicos'*; as one of those whose portion it is to continue My mission on earth, throughout ages, to be among men a consoler, a guide, and a savior. You will bring the consolations of faith to the poor, the suffering, the sorrowful; by word and example, you will show to all those intrusted to your care the way to their eternal home; you will pass through the world, as I did, in doing good. I will be with you, every day, to enlighten you, to comfort you, to strengthen you: '*Ecce ego vobiscum sum, omnibus diebus.*' God's will in my regard was finally made known to me in an unmistakable manner, through the medium of my Superiors and of my Bishop." Then I answered the call and followed Thee, O Lord Jesus, willingly and generously, or perhaps with hesitation, and with regret for the things I had to leave behind. What motives urged me on to the altar? Was it the holiness of the state, the greatness of the work, a sincere desire to give glory to God and save souls? Lord, forgive me if I ever sought purely human advantages of honor and comfort in Thy Holy Priesthood. I know that a priest, although living in the world to lead men to Thee, is not of the world, and should not fall under its influence, but keep his mind and heart turned towards the things of Heaven.

III

O Lord, grant that I may more and more clearly understand the greatness and spirit of my vocation, the privilege of being a priest, a successor of Thy Apostles; make me value my lot above all earthly honors and pleasures; make me seek and find happiness only in the complete fulfilment of the great and noble duties which Thou hast intrusted to me.

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions.*

*"Gratias Deo super inenarrabili dono ejus."*

## 2. THE SEMINARY

"ET PRO EIS EGO SANCTIFICO MEIPSUM." *(John xvii. 19)*

I

I CAN easily picture to myself Our Blessed Savior as He journeys with the Twelve over the rough roads and paths of Judea and Galilee, as He sits with them on the mountain-side or on the shore of the lake. When the crowds have withdrawn, He explains more fully to His Apostles the doctrine which He preached to the multitudes: *"Et docebat eos."* He deepens and strengthens their faith by many miracles, corrects their defects, teaches them, by word and example, to love, console, and relieve the poor and the suffering, to pity and forgive sinners; He trains them to prayer, self-denial, and the practice of all virtues. Such was the first seminary, an unfailing source of inspiration, and a supreme model for the training of the future generations of apostles.

*Acts of adoration, admiration, and love.*

II

Jesus Himself, really present in the Tabernacle, presided over the course of my preparation to the Holy Priesthood. He led me step by step to the summit of the *"Mons Domini,"* the longed-for goal of my youthful dreams, either directly by the inspiration and power of His grace, or indirectly by the medium of those whom He had appointed to guide me on the way.

In the peaceful solitude and holy atmosphere of the seminary, far from the dangers and allurements of the world where so few think seriously of their eternal salvation, free from such cares and responsibilities as weigh upon me to-day, I devoted all my time and efforts to the preparation of the blessed hour when the distant and dim vision of my boyhood was to become a present and clear reality.

There I learned the doctrine and precepts which I now have to teach, and strove to acquire the knowledge expected of those to whom Our Lord said: *"Vos estis lux mundi," "Docete omnes gentes."* There I was taught to raise my mind and heart to God, and endeavored to become what a priest ought to be to carry on a work eminently supernatural, *a man of prayer*. There the repeated efforts required to obey the many points of a Rule, which often ran counter to my natural inclinations, afforded me as many opportunities to form habits of self-denial and self-sacrifice, and to develop in me the sense of duty. Finally, by word and example, I was constantly directed and encouraged in the practice of the natural and supernatural virtues which he must possess in a high degree who has been called by Christ Himself "The salt of the earth." It was that personal holiness which Our Lord asked for each one of His apostles, on the eve of His Death, when He said to His Father: *"Sanctifica eos in veritate"*; and He added these words which every priest and aspirant to the Holy Priesthood should remember as a motto and an incentive in the work of his sanctification: *"Et pro eis ego sanctifico meipsum, ut sint et ipsi sanctificati in veritate."*

Such were the most important of the many advantages which I enjoyed during the years of my life in the seminary; I will always remember them with sentiments of gratitude towards the kind Providence that granted them to me. Great and bright then were my hopes, generous and sincere my resolutions.

## III

Have I lived up to the high standard of priestly life which was set before me in the seminary, and which I willingly accepted as being the only one worthy of my vocation? Have not my ideals been lowered or obscured by the many cares and preoccupations of a busy life, or perhaps by neglect and sin? Am I as really pious as I was then, and as zealous as I then intended to be? Is my conscience as delicate as it was in the days of my seminary life? Have I not also deserved the reproof which Christ addressed, through St. John the Apostle, to the angel of the Church of Ephesus: "But I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first charity. Be mindful therefore from whence thou art fallen: and do penance, and do the first works. Or else I come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place except thou do penance" (Apoc. ii. 4-5).

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*
*"Memor esto unde excideris, . . . et prima opera fac."*

## 3. TONSURE—I

### "DOMINUS PARS HÆREDITATIS MEÆ"

### I

"They carried Him to Jerusalem, to present Him to the Lord, . . . and to offer a sacrifice." The two doves immolated on that occasion, according to the law of Moses, were only the figure; the real Victim, innocent and spotless, was the divine Child Himself accepting and offering in advance, from the very beginning of His life, the great sacrifice of our Redemption, with His holy Mother as a silent and sorrowful witness, as she was to be later at the foot of the Cross. Hence the prophetic words which then fell from the lips of Simeon: "Behold this Child is set forth for the fall, and for the resurrection of many in Israel. . . . And thy own soul a sword shall pierce' (Luke ii. 22-36).

*Acts of adoration, praise, and love.*

### II

When, under the influence of seminary training, I had been enabled to understand more fully the meaning of the priestly vocation, the day came when I was to make a first solemn offering of myself, at the foot of the altar, and dedicate my life to the service of the Lord. I could not of myself claim so high an honor; but I was called by God through the voice of my Superiors, and, like Samuel in the Temple, I hastened to answer: "*Ecce ego: quia vocasti me*" (I Kings iii. 6). Let others seek earthly joys and honors; I choose Thy House as my dwelling, and Thee, O Lord, as my Master: "*Melior est dies una in atriis* *tuis super millia*" (Ps. lxxxiii. 11). Here I will be, every day, thy humble and devoted servant: "*Elegi abjectus esse in domo Dei mei: magis quam habitare in tabernaculis peccatorum*" (*Idem*). And willingly, joyfully, I gave myself entirely to God—my mind, my will, my heart, and my body: "*In simplicitate cordis mei, lætus obtuli universa.*"

And so, on that blessed day, in spite of my unworthiness, I was set apart as one of those destined from all eternity to live in the presence of the heavenly King, and to prepare for a high office in His Kingdom. "*Assumptus in opus ministerii.*" Thanks be to the Lord who granted me so great a privilege, in His infinite kindness and mercy: "*suscitans a terra inopem, . . . ut collocet eum cum principibus populi sui.*"

I had thus become a member of the Clergy, and was entitled to wear the clerical habit, the cassock and the surplice. The cassock, by its color, signified that I was dead to the world and its vanities; by its length, that I belonged entirely to God, and that He alone was to be, henceforward and for ever, the portion of my inheritance: "*Dominus pars hæreditatis meæ, et calicis mei: tu es qui restitues hæreditatem meam mihi.*" The surplice was the symbol of the life of innocence and purity which I had to live, to be worthy of my calling, and the image of Jesus Christ risen from the dead: "*Induat te Dominus novum hominem, qui secundum Deum creatus est in justitia et sanctitate veritatis*" (Ephes. v. 24).

## III

Have I been faithful to the spirit of my first solemn consecration to the Lord? Have I never taken back a part of what I then freely and sincerely gave Him? Have I not forgotten the symbolic meaning of my cassock and surplice, and the obligations of which they should constantly remind me?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions.*

*Prayer:* O Jesus, Thou didst lead me safely, through many difficulties and dangers, and with the help of numberless graces and favors, to the promised land of Thy sanctuary where Thou didst plant me, like a chosen vine, to bear good fruit of holiness and salvation: If I have ever showed myself unworthy of Thy great kindness to me, I now sincerely repent of my negligence and ingratitude. I will henceforward strive to remain faithful to the promises I made Thee on the day of my Tonsure: Thou alone shalt for ever be the portion of my inheritance. *"Dominus pars hæreditatis meæ."*

## 4. TONSURE—II

"DE MUNDO NON ESTIS." *(John xv. 19)*

### I

JESUS had just left the Cenacle, after instituting the Holy Eucharist and the Holy Priesthood which were to perpetuate His presence among men. He was on his way to the Garden of Olives; for the hour had come which He had chosen for the offering of the supreme sacrifice. At that solemn moment, He gave His Apostles His last instructions and exhortations. He knew what dangers and trials awaited them after His death, and He lovingly warned and encouraged them, saying: "If the world hate you, know you that it hath hated Me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own: but because *you are not of the world*, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John xv. 18-19).

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, and love.*

## II

"*De mundo non estis, sed ego elegi vos de mundo.*" These words were meant for me also; this I clearly understood, on the day of my Clerical Consecration, when I took the first step towards the altar, hoping soon to be numbered among the successors of those to whom they were spoken. I knew that I was to live in the world, without being of the world. As a Christian I had already renounced the spiritual evils of the world, when, on the blessed day of my First Holy Communion, I freely renewed the promises made in my name when I was baptized; those, however, concerned only unlawful pleasures and pursuits. On receiving me among the elect of the Sanctuary, God required more of me: He gave Himself to me as the portion of my inheritance, and asked me to offer Him, in return, the sacrifice of certain joys and pleasures permitted to those whose place in the church is behind the altar rail. My lot was indeed rich and beautiful, since God Himself was to be the object and source of my happiness here below, with the pure and sweet consolations of the altar, of the tabernacle, of prayer, of sacrifice, and of zeal for souls. I was to live in God, from God, and for God.

Such was the deep significance of my Clerical Consecration, and such is the spirit which must now guide me as a priest. I am not of the world, and consequently:

1. My *thoughts* must differ from the thoughts of those who are of the world. I must consider and value all things, not from the point of view of earthly honors, pleasures, and pursuits, but in the light of faith and eternity, remembering the exhortation of St. John the Apostle: *"Nolite diligere mundum, neque ea quæ in mundo sunt. Si quis diligit mundum, non est caritas Patris in eo"* (I John ii. 15).

2. My *speech* must differ from the speech of those who are of the world: it should not savor of vanity, frivolity, deceit, or sensuality, but of simplicity, reserve, frankness, and kindness.

3. My *actions* must differ from the actions of those who are of the world, in dress, deportment, employment of time, and social relations. I should always remember and never allow others to forget that I am one of God's representatives and ministers on earth. *"In incessu, statu, habitu, et omnibus motibus vestris, nihil fiat quod cujusquam offendat aspectum, sed quod vestram deceat sanctitatem."*—ST. AUGUSTINE.

## III

Has this been my attitude since the day of my Tonsure? Have I ordinarily been influenced by the spirit of detachment from the world in my thoughts and desires, in my words and deeds? What are my present dispositions in this regard? Can I discover any signs of a more or less worldly spirit in my views and plans, in my conversations, dress, furniture, choice of books and reviews, inordinate love of sports, comfort, or luxury?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions.*

*Prayer.* O good and merciful Master, forgive me my lack of generosity in Thy service. Revive in me the grace and spirit of my first solemn consecration to Thee. I will henceforth strive to remember, in the practice of my daily life, my promises and obligations as a member of the Clergy. I know that I shall always have to defend myself against the influence of the world, as Thou didst foretell; *"In mundo pressuram habebitis"*; but I also feel that I can trust in Thy power and depend on the assistance which, at the same moment, Thou didst promise, saying: *"Sed, confidite, ego vici mundum."*

## 5. THE OSTIARIUS

"VIDETE QUAE IN DOMO DEI AGERE DEBEATIS."
*(Pontifical)*

### I

"AND Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the chairs of them that sold doves. And He saith to them: 'It is written: "My house shall be called the house of prayer": but you have made it a den of thieves'" (Matt. xxi. 12-14). O Lord, I admire the zeal which Thou didst diplay to preserve the honor and holiness of Thy Father's House: deign to revive and increase in me this same disposition, in the course of this meditation.

### II

AFTER I had been separated from the world by the ceremony of clerical Tonsure, and granted a place in the Sanctuary, as a guard of honor of the King of kings, I continued, with new courage, my life of study and prayer, while awaiting the will of my divine

Master. Then I was invited to ascend the first step leading to the altar, and to take up active service in the House of the Lord, when I stood among those to whom the Bishop said: *"Accedant qui ordinandi sunt ad officium ostiariorum."* Humble in themselves were the first functions entrusted to me, but great in reality, considering the dignity of the Master whom I was called to serve. Since it is now especially, as a priest, that I am bound to discharge the duties then imposed upon me as an Ostiarius, I must make sure that I understand them well, as I recall them one by one from the text of the Pontifical.

1. *"Ostiarium oportet percutere cymbalum, et campanam."* The Ostiarius must call the faithful to church by means of the wide-spreading sound of the bell. As a priest, I may still have, at times, to fulfill this humble duty; but it is especially the power of speech which I must now employ to draw men to God's altar. May my voice resound as loud and reach as far as the vibrations of the sacred metal! May it be heard and obeyed by all those whom I call in the name of God!

2. The Ostiarius must open the door of the church to those who have answered his call, and also the door of the vestry: *"Aperire ecclesiam et sacrarium."* As a priest, I am now an Ostiarius of Heaven: by my zeal, by words and examples, and by the virtue of the Sacraments, I open the gate of the heavenly mansion to the souls confided to my care.

The Pontifical dwells on this second function, because of its importance; for it implies the care of the church and vestry, of the sacred vessels, of the vestments and all objects used in divine worship, but, above all, of the adorable Person of Our Lord in the

Tabernacle; the Ostiarius should therefore be, like St. Joseph at Nazareth, the faithful and loving guardian of his Lord, "*Custos Domini sui.*" The responsibility of his office is emphasized by the following admonition: "*Providete igitur, ne per negligentiam vestram, illarum rerum, quae intra Ecclesiam sunt, aliquid depereat.*"

A priest who has received and preserved the spirit and grace of the Ostiarius is careful to have the church doors locked, at night, and the Tabernacle key laid in a safe place, after Mass. He keeps his church, especially the sanctuary and the altar, in a state of order and neatness. The sacred linen, the altar cloths, the albs and surplices are clean and becoming. The vestments are carefully laid in their case, mended when torn, and replaced when faded or shabby. The sanctuary lamp is kept burning and neat. On Sundays and Feasts, the altar is tastefully decorated with flowers. When he builds or repairs his church, he tries to make it as beautiful as circumstances allow, out of reverence to the divine Guest who dwells in it. From the spirit of faith and religion which guides him in fulfilling his office as an Ostiarius, it is easy to see that he has not forgotten the exhortation and admonition of the Bishop entrusting to him the keys of the church: "*Sic age, quasi redditurus Deo rationem pro iis rebus, quae his clavibus recluduntur.*"

3. Together with reverence and zeal for the House of God, the Church requires of the Ostiarius *punctuality* in the discharge of his duties: "*Certisque horis domum Dei aperiatis fidelibus,*" a valuable quality which helps a priest in securing regular attendance at Mass, makes easier the approach to the confessional, spreads satisfaction and fosters good spirit among the

parishioners in regard to parochial ministration and service.

III

Have I preserved and developed in me the spirit of religion characteristic of the worthy Ostiarius? With what care and zeal do I perform the functions of this Order with respect to God's material and spiritual temples? Have I acquired the habit of punctuality in the fulfilment of my priestly duties?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Qui in modico fidelis est, et in majori fidelis erit*" (Luke xvi. 10).

## 6. The Lector

"QUOD ORE LEGITIS, CORDE CREDATIS, ATQUE OPERE COMPLEATIS." *(Pontifical)*

I

"And He came to Nazareth, where He was brought up, and He went to the synagogue according to His custom on the Sabbath-day, and He rose up to read. And the book of Isaias the prophet was delivered unto Him. . . . And when He had folded the book, He restored it to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. . . . And they wondered at the words of grace that proceeded from His mouth" (Luke iv, 16-22). O Jesus, *lux vera,* enlighten my mind, that I may clearly understand the nature and importance of the office of Lector which Thou didst exercise as a part of Thy sacred ministry.

II

The office of Lector was highly appreciated in the early Church. It was not indiscriminately conferred upon any Christian of good standing and sufficient ability, but it was often granted as a mark of distinction to learned and virtuous men, or as a reward to those who had suffered persecution for Christ's name. When St. John Chrysostom was promoted to the office of Lector by the Bishop of Antioch, he was already considered worthy of the episcopal dignity, on account of his great learning and remarkable holiness.

The Pontifical assigns two functions to the Lector. He must, first, read the text of the Bible which the preacher is going to explain, and sing the Lessons taken from Holy Scripture: "*Lectorem oportet legere ei qui prædicat, et lectiones cantare.*" He must, secondly, bless the bread and the new fruits offered to God by the faithful: "*Benedicere panem, et omnes fructus novos.*" As, in the present discipline of the Church, all the blessings are reserved to the priest, I will dwell only on the first function, that from which the Lector derives his name.

The Lector is expected to read Holy Scripture distinctly and clearly: "*Stude igitur verba Dei distincte et aperte, ad intelligentiam et aedificationem fidelium, proferre.*" This duty binds me as a priest by virtue of my ordination to the rank of Lector. When, therefore, I read the Epistle and the Gospel, the announcements, the pastoral letters, or any instructive and edifying text, and still more when I preach the word of God, it is my duty to aim at distinct and clear enunciation, so as to be easily heard and understood by the congregation; I should also try to arouse and keep the attention of my audience by natural and appropriate inflections of the voice. If good reading is in itself an art, for a priest it is moreover an efficient instrument of apostolic zeal.

Clear, distinct, and reverent reading is also required of a priest in the celebration of the Mass, in public prayers and blessings, and in the administration of the Sacraments. The faithful are favorably impressed by a careful and devotional utterance of the beautiful prayers of the Church, whereas they are left indifferent, if not shocked and scandalized, by a hurried and graceless mumbling of the sacred words of our Liturgy.

The Lector is also, by virtue of his office, entrusted with the care of liturgical music:

"*Lectiones cantare.*" Later on, as a priest, he will have to sing a part of the sacred text, at the altar; he should therefore, out of respect for the Master whom he serves and for the edification of the faithful, prepare carefully to discharge this function in a worthy manner. It will be his duty to supervise the choice and rendering of the music in his church, at least to the extent of enforcing the official rules and directions, firmly and wisely, according to circumstances. Singing plays an important part in external worship, for there is great power in the human voice. It is for the priest, as a lector, to make sure that this power is used, in the church, to unite the worshippers in the same pious impressions, and arouse in their hearts truly religious emotions.

Finally, according to the traditional interpretation of the Pontifical, it is a part of the Lector's office to instruct the ignorant, especially children, in the elements of Christian doctrine. This is undoubtedly a most important function; for is it not, above all, in the Sunday School that Christians are trained, that they learn those religious principles which must guide them through life, as well as their duties to God and men, and form those religious habits which will be the feeders of their souls? The future of a parish depends, in a large measure, on the care and zeal with which its Sunday School is conducted. What responsibility would that priest assume before God, who would undervalue the importance of this duty, fail to take a direct and personal interest in the religious training of children, and leave it almost entirely to incompetent lay teachers!

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.* "*Officium vestrum agnoscite, et implete.*" (Pontifical)

## 7. THE EXORCIST

"DISCITE PER OFFICIUM VESTRUM VITIIS IMPERARE."
*(Pontifical)*

### I

"And in the synagogue there was a man who had an unclean devil, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying: Let us alone, what have we to do with Thee, Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying: Hold thy peace, and go out of him. And when the devil had thrown him into the midst, he went out of him, and hurt him not at all. And there came fear upon all, and they talked among themselves, saying: What word is this, for with authority and power He commandeth the unclean spirits, and they go out? (Luke iv. 33-37.) I humbly adore Thy supreme authority over all created beings, material and spiritual, O Jesus, before whom all in heaven, on earth, and in hell must bend their knee. I thank Thee for having imparted Thy power over the spirits of evil to Thy apostles and their successors, and even to me Thy unworthy servant. "Then calling together the twelve Apostles, He gave them power and authority over all devils. (Luke ix. 1.)

## II

Through the rite of ordination the Exorcist is given a share in Christ's power over evil spirits: "*Exorcistam etenim oportet abjicere dæmones.*" It is, besides, his duty to keep good order in the congregation during church services: "*et dicere populo ut qui non communicat det locum.*" He must, finally, have the water blessed, and carry it whenever it is to be used in liturgical functions: "*et aquam in ministerio fundere.*"

The first of these three duties is clearly the highest and the most characteristic of this order; this is why the Pontifical dwells on it exclusively in the text prescribed for this ordination.

St. Paul tells us that our struggle here-below is not only against the flesh, but also against the princes of darkness. Although Satan's sway has been broken by the redeeming sacrifice of Our Blessed Savior, the demon still retains a certain amount of power over man's body. Hence Christ, speaking of those who were to continue His mission on earth, said: "In My name they shall cast out devils."

However, Exorcism is not a sacrament producing its effect *ex opere operato,* but a sacramental which operates by virtue of both the prayers of the Church and the faith and holiness of the minister. The Exorcist is therefore bound, by the nature of his office, to aim at personal sanctity: "*Studete igitur ut, sicut a corporibus aliorum dæmones expellitis, ita a menti-*

*bus et corporibus vestris, omnem immunditiam et nequitiam ejiciatis; ne illis succumbatis quos ab aliis, vestro ministerio, effugatis."*

These are words which I should remember. In all probability, I shall never be called upon to cast devils out of human bodies; this function, frequently exercised in the early Church, was for me but a step and preparation to a higher office, which was later entrusted to me when I received the power to cast the devil out of human souls by the virtue of Baptism and Absolution. When therefore I administer these holy Sacraments, should I not be able to say with Our Lord: *"Venit princeps hujus mundi, et in me non habet quidquam"?* For can I be so presumptuous as to exorcise the souls of others, while my own soul is but incompletely free from Satan's bondage? How shall I dare to say to the demon of sensuality and pride: *"Exi ab eo,"* if my own soul is, even partly, under his power? Shall I not deserve to hear the answer which the devil gave the unworthy Jews who were trying to cast him out in the name of Jesus: "I know Jesus, I know Paul; but you, who are you"? "I am the spirit of pride, he might say: are *you* humble? I am the spirit of sensuality: are *you* pure and mortified? I am the spirit of rebellion: do *you* readily obey the laws of the Church and the orders of your ecclesiastical superiors? I am the father of lies and deceit: are *you* truthful, sincere, and honest?"—How irrefutable those words would be, if I had not, as a priest, the spirit and virtue which the Church required of me as an Exorcist, when I heard the ordaining Bishop say: *"Discite per officium vestrum vitiis imperare; ne in moribus vestris aliquid sui juris inimicus valeat vindicare. Tunc enim recte* *in aliis dæmonibus imperabitis, cum prius in vobis eorum multimodam nequitiam superatis.''*

I must therefore first subdue the evil spirits in me, and completely drive them out of my soul, by a virtuous life and a great delicacy of conscience; then only shall I feel entitled to cast them out of the souls entrusted to my care, that Christ may reign over them as He reigns over me.

*Examination of conscience—Contrition—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*''Discite per officium vestrum vitiis imperare.''*

## 8. THE ACOLYTE

### ''UT FILII LUCIS AMBULATE'' *(Pontifical)*

### I

''Jesus spoke to them, saying: I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life.'' (John viii. 12.) ''He was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world.'' (John i. 9.) He came from the splendor of the Father, *lumen de lumine,* to dispel the darkness of error and sin. For a few years, He shone in our midst, and, before returning to heaven, reflected His divine light into the souls of His Apostles, and ordered them to carry it to the utmost confines of the earth, that it might guide our steps to heaven: *''Vos estis lux mundi.''*

*—Acts of adoration, gratitude.*

### II

The Acolyte has two distinct functions to perform: he must take care of the lights in the church, and carry them during liturgical services; he must assist the deacon and subdeacon at a solemn High Mass, and minister to the priest at Low Mass: "*Acolythum oportet ceroferarium ferre, luminaria Ecclesiæ accendere; vinum et aquam ad Eucharistiam ministrare.*" Since, in practice, these duties are not now reserved to the Acolyte, it is their spirit and the dispositions they require of me, as a priest, that I should consider.

1—The material light, which the Acolyte carries in his hands, is the symbol of the spiritual light which he himself must be to others: "*Non enim Deo placere poteritis, si lucem Deo manibus præferentes, operibus tenebrarum inserviatis, et per hoc aliis exempla perfidiæ præbeatis.*" The light of God's word is in the hands of the Priest and of the Deacon; the Acolyte's duty is to make the light of his good example shine before men: "*Luceat lux vestra coram hominibus, ut videant opera vestra bona, et glorificent Patrem vestrum qui in cœlis est.*" Good example is more efficient than word, even than the word of God; for it is the Incarnate Word of God, expressed and made known by good deeds more clearly and forcibly than by the sound of the voice. Rightly then does the Pontifical apply to the Acolyte these words of St. Paul: "*In medio nationis pravæ et perversæ, lucete sicut luminaria in mundo.*" To carry a light in my hands, at the solemn services of our Liturgy, is indeed an honorable function; but to show Christ's divine light in my actions is the special and most important duty imposed upon me as one of those to whom the Church said through the voice of the ordaining Bishop: "*Ut filii lucis ambulate.*"

2—Higher still in itself, if not in its symbol and practical consequences, is the second function of the

Acolyte, which ranks him among the ministers who surround the adorable Person of Our Lord, and serve Him at the altar; an honor that would befit angels better than men. The piety which the Bishop asks of God for the Acolyte, in the last prayer, must centre around the altar and the tabernacle; it must be Eucharistic. The Blessed Sacrament must be to the Acolyte his richest treasure and strongest attraction. He must like to kneel and pray before Our Lord in the tabernacle, and, even as a priest, must deem it a privilege to serve Mass when circumstances require, and to perform some minor function at the altar during liturgical services. Let him remember Tarcisius, the young martyr of the Holy Eucharist, the Acolyte's brother and patron saint; and, when he leaves the altar, carrying Jesus in his breast, let him, like Tarcisius, so highly value and so faithfully keep his treasure that nothing, neither the allurements of the world, nor the false pleasure of sin, nor even death itself shall ever be able to separate him from the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Examination of conscience on good example, and devotion to the Holy Eucharist—Contrition—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Ut filii lucis ambulate."*

## 9. THE SUBDEACON—I. THE STEP

### "IN NOMINE DOMINI, HUC ACCEDITE"

### I

"Then Jesus said to His disciples: If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For he that will save his life, shall lose it: and he that shall lose his life for My sake, shall find it." (Matt. xvi. 25-26.) "No man putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke ix. 62.) Such are the conditions laid down by the divine Master to those who wish to devote themselves irrevocably to His service.

*Acts of adoration, self-offering.*

## II

In proportion as I advanced towards the highest grade of the clerical state, the reciprocal offering of God to me and of myself to God became more explicit and irrevocable. When I received Tonsure, I did not hear the Bishop say: *"Quod si hunc ordinem susceperis, non amplius licebit a proposito resilire."* It was undoubtedly my intention to take the final step later, but I still remained free to change my mind. But, when I was ordained Subdeacon, I surrendered myself entirely to God forever. God accepted my offering and, in return, gave Himself to me. It was therefore a perfect and indissoluble contract that I then signed, and I heartily thank God who created and preserved me for such a day as that of my ordination to the Subdeaconship.

When Our Lord called St. Paul to His service, He did not conceal from him the labors and sufferings which awaited him: *"Ostendam illi quantum oporteat pro nomine meo pati."* So did the ordaining Bishop clearly call my attention not to the honor conferred, but to the burden imposed upon me by the order which I was going to receive: *"Iterum atque iterum* *considerare debetis attente, quod* onus *hodie ultro appetitis.*" Do you feel capable of carrying it not only for a month, a year, but all your life? You are still free to choose: "*Hactenus liberi estis, licetque vobis pro arbitrio ad sæcularia vota transire.*" You can save your souls in the world, while enjoying, within the limits of God's law, certain pleasures and satisfactions which you are now about to give up for ever. But if your aspirations are higher and nobler, if you sincerely desire to consecrate and devote yourselves to the service of God and the salvation of your fellow-men, with Christ and His Apostles, with legions of good and holy priests, then, in the name of the Lord, step forward: "*In nomine Domini, huc accedite.*" But realize the extent of the obligations which you thus assume: you bind yourselves irrevocably to serve God as your only Master, and to keep perpetual and perfect chastity: "*Deo, cui servire regnare est, perpetuo famulari; et castitatem, illo adjuvante, servare oportebit.*" This is a matter worthy of serious consideration: "*Proinde, dum tempus est, cogitate.*"

My choice was already made; I willingly and generously took the decisive and final step towards the altar. Then, with my companions in this sacred holocaust, I fell prostrate on the floor of the sanctuary, and remained there offering myself to the Lord as a victim, while the Church was entrusting us to the protection of her Saints. "Lord Jesus," she seemed to say, "behold those whom Thou hast called to the highest dignity on earth now lying before Thee to acknowledge their unworthiness, yet expecting that Thou shalt raise them from their lowly state and place them among the princes of Thy people: '*Susci-*

*tans a terra inopem . . . ut collocet eum cum principibus populi sui.'* Here are victims ready for the sacrifice, who have thrown themselves together as if to form, with their own bodies and souls, an impassable barrier of labor, prayers, and self-denial between men and the gates of Hell.''

''May those who preceded them in the Holy Priesthood, and are now enjoying the reward of the faithful servants, bless and protect their successors in Christ's vineyard: *'Omnes sancti Sacerdotes et Levitæ, orate pro nobis.'*—May all the Saints of the Church Triumphant, Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins, to whom the Church Militant has recourse in her great needs and dangers, obtain that these young Levites may, to their last breath, remain faithful to the spirit and obligations of their noble and holy vocation: *'Omnes Sancti et Sanctæ Dei, intercedite pro nobis.'* —May God Himself bless, sanctify, and consecrate these elect, in answer to the prayers of the Bishop and of the congregation united in a common supplication: *'Ut hos electos benedicere, sanctificare, et consecrare digneris, te rogamus, audi nos.' ''*

The dead remain lying motionless in their coffins after the last note of the *Libera* has been heard; but, when the solemn invocation was over, I arose with a renewed life destined to bear fruit of salvation in due time. Did I ever have to regret the step which I took on the day of my Subdeaconship? Have I always been faithful to the vows and resolutions which I then made?

*Examination of conscience—Renewal of my consecration—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*''Castitatem servare oportebit.''*

## 10. THE SUBDEACON—II. FUNCTIONS AND VESTMENTS

"VIDETE CUJUS MINISTERIUM VOBIS TRADITUR"

### I

"JESUS called them [His apostles] to him, and said: You know that the princes of the gentiles lord it over them: and they that are the greater, exercise power upon them. It shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be the greater among you, let him be your minister. And he that will be the first among you, shall be your servant. Even as the Son of man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a redemption for many." (Matt. 25-28.) To minister at God's altar, like a humble and devoted servant; to live, with a cheerful heart, a life of self-denial and self-sacrifice, such is the lot and duty of a Subdeacon. O Lord, make me more vividly realize the extent of my obligations and the spirit of this Order, as I recall the sacred rites through which I bound myself to serve Thee for ever.

### II

1.—THE functions of the Subdeacon, mentioned by the Bishop in his admonition, are related both to the natural Body of Christ present in the Holy Eucharist, and to his mystical Body, the assembly of the faithful.

The Subdeacon prepares the water for the Holy Sacrifice, and, at a solemn High Mass, pours the symbolic drop into the chalice. He assists the Deacon, sings the Epistle, carries the chalice to the altar, purifies it after Communion, and takes it back to the credence. He no longer receives the offerings of bread from the congregation, as was done in former times, but prepares the chalice and ciborium, being careful that the altar bread is in a proper state of preservation, "*ne aliquid putridum in sacrario remaneat.*" He also washes the sacred linen used for the Holy Sacrifice.

While performing his external functions with care and punctuality, "*nitide et diligentissime,*" the Subdeacon should not lose sight of the invisible mysteries which they represent. The altar symbolizes Christ Himself, "*Altare quidem ipse est Christus.*" The corporal, pall, and purificators are the "*membra Christi, scilicet fideles Dei,*" or again, the swaddling clothes of Bethlehem, and the shroud of the sepulchre. We can well imagine with what respect Mary at the Crib, and Joseph of Arimathea at the foot of the Cross, handled the cloth which was used to wrap the body of the Lord: great also should be the reverence and piety of the Subdeacon while discharging this function of his Order.

The recitation of the Divine Office, although not mentioned in the text of the Pontifical, is however the most important duty imposed upon the Subdeacon, as being the most efficient means for him to give glory to God, to share in the work of sanctification and salvation of souls, as well as a powerful help in the practice of the virtues which the Church requires of him, and which are all summed up in the word "chastity."

When the candidate to the Subdeaconship has touched the empty chalice and paten, thus implicitly declaring that he accepts the functions which they signify, when he has heard from the lips of the Bishop the words which confer upon him his sacred office, with the fitting exhortation: *"Videte cujus ministerium vobis traditur; ideo vos admoneo, ut ita vos exhibeatis, ut Deo placere possitis,"* then he knows that a great change has taken place in his life, and that he is bound to Christ by grave and perpetual obligations. Through the prayer of the Bishop and of the congregation, he receives special graces which will help him to live up to his dignity and worthily fulfill his office.

2.—The inward work is done, and the new Subdeacon must now be invested with the insignia of his Order. He first receives the *Amice,* which, laid around his neck and over his head, will remind him that, having attained to the fulness of the age of Christ, he should henceforth speak like Christ, with reserve and modesty: *"Accipe amictum, per quem designatur castigatio vocis."* There is a certain dignity which a minister of Christ, be he a subdeacon, a deacon, or a priest, should always keep in his conversations, especially in the presence of the laity. The people instinctively feel that he is by vocation a man of God, a messenger of heaven, and that his speech should be in harmony with his sacred character and his noble mission.

The *Maniple,* which is then given him, symbolizes the fruit of good work, *"fructus bonorum operum."* It reminds him of the joy of the harvest which follows the hardships of the sowing season. The *Tunic* expresses the joy which fills the heart of Christ's faithful minister, *"Tunica jucunditatis."* The *Alb* is the emblem of the perfect purity required of the Subdeacon. The *Cincture,* which fastens the Alb around the body, signifies the strength and courage which he needs to check and subdue the inclinations of the flesh: "*Lumbos enim præcingimus, cum carnis luxuriam per continentiam coarctamus.*" (St. Gregory.) Clad in the vestments of his Order, the Subdeacon is now ready to perform his functions. He therefore kneels before the Bishop, and receives from him the Book of the Epistles; from that abundant source he will draw the water of the heavenly doctrine which he will, later, pour into the souls of men, and which can now quicken the seed of his own sanctification.

Do I faithfully and reverently fulfill, as a priest, the functions entrusted to me, and the obligations imposed upon me as a subdeacon?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*
"*Estote ergo tales qui sacrificiis divinis servire valeatis.*"

## 11. The Deacon—I. The Solemn Inquiry

"SCIS ILLOS DIGNOS ESSE?" *(Pontifical)*

### I

Before appointing and ordaining the first deacons of the Church, the apostles calling together the multitude of the disciples said: "Look ye out among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom. . . And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip. . . These they set before the apostles: and they praying imposed hands upon them. . . And Stephen full of grace and fortitude did great wonders and signs among the people." (Acts vi. 2-8.) Such were the first call and ordination to the Deaconship; such were the virtues and dispositions required of the first Deacons.

## II

What a striking resemblance between that impressive scene at Jerusalem and the circumstances of my own ordination to the Deaconship! "*Accedant qui ordinandi sunt ad Diaconatum.*" I heard my name: that was the official call. Then followed the presentation of the candidates to the Prelate by the Archdeacon representing the body of the faithful: "*Postulat Sancta Mater Ecclesia catholica, ut hos præsentes Subdiaconos ad onus Diaconii ordinetis.*" It is the Church that makes the request, for it is the Church who is in need of souls for her divine Founder, and of ministers for those souls. The Bishop holds in his hands the treasures of the Church; he will not squander them, but bestow them with wisdom and prudence; he will not deliver the inheritance of St. Stephen to unworthy successors. Hence his inquiry about the moral character and intellectual qualifications of the candidates before him: "*Scis illos dignos esse?*" And, when in the midst of the deepest silence and most solemn expectation, the voice of the Archdeacon is heard, saying: "*Quantum humana fragilitas nosse sinit, et scio, et testificor ipsos dignos esse ad hujus onus officii.*" the Prelate answers "*Deo gratias,*" thus expressing his satisfaction and gratitude at the happy conclusion of this short but most significant dialogue.

However, the Bishop is not yet satisfied: the interests at stake are so important that he feels the need of more light and greater security. He therefore addresses the people present at the Ceremony, and adjures them, in God's name and for God's sake, to make known to him such as they may consider unworthy of so exalted an Office: "*Si quis habet aliquid* *contra illos, cum fiducia exeat et dicat.*" How beautiful is that scene, how solemn that inquiry! How eloquently it proclaims the obligation for the future Deacon to be a man of good repute, of a tried and well known virtue!

What were my thoughts and feelings, at that sacred moment? While the Archdeacon was testifying in my favor, and the congregation giving a silent consent, what voice did I hear in the inner sanctuary of my soul? I knew my past life and my present dispositions. The Bishop had called me; his representatives in the Seminary had likewise called me; my confessor also had said before God and me alone: "*Et scio, et testificor ipsum dignum esse.*" But what did my own conscience say? What did my guardian angel say, the constant witness of my thoughts and deeds? What did God Himself say, who searches the hearts of men? It was for me to foresee this investigation and prepare a satisfactory answer, before the day of my ordination. Had this been carefully done? What joy and peace I then experienced, if the answer was affirmative! If it was negative or doubtful, I could but humble myself before God with sentiments of sincere repentance, and ask for a change of heart through the grace of the Sacrament. For I was about to be marked with the indelible character of the Deaconship; henceforward I was to be a deacon for ever, before God and men, in this life and in the next. The Holy Ghost was to come into my soul, through the imposition of the Bishop's hands, imparting to me, as to the first priests and deacons, that spiritual strength which animated St. Stephen, St. Lawrence, St. Francis of Assisi, and would enable me also to live up to my new dignity and duties: "*Accipe*

*Spiritum Sanctum ad robur, et ad resistendum diabolo, et tentationibus ejus.*" Then, in spite of my natural weakness, I could feel confident and say with St. Paul; "*Omnia possum in eo qui me confortat*"—"*Quum infirmor, tunc potens sum.*" With the assistance of the Holy Spirit, I could be an example to the faithful by the purity of my life, and a source of joy and peace to my own heart by the testimony of a good conscience; I could persevere firm and steadfast in Christ, and soon deserve to be raised to the dignity of the Holy Priesthood, the supreme goal of my life on earth.

### III

SINCE the day of my ordination to the Deaconship, has my life been characterized by the spirit of strength which I then received? What use have I made of that precious gift? Have I not many weaknesses to deplore with regard to my spiritual life and the discharge of my duties? What were their main causes, and how can I avoid them in the future?—What answer should I expect from others and from myself, if the Bishop were again to inquire about me and ask: "*Scis illum dignum esse?*"

*Examination of conscience—Contrition—Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Accipe Spiritum Sanctum ad robur.*"

## 12. THE DEACON—II. FUNCTIONS AND VESTMENTS

### "DIACONUM OPORTET MINISTRARE"

### I

WHEN Pope Sixtus was led to the scene of his martyrdom, his faithful deacon, Lawrence, walked by his side, asking with tears for the favor of being allowed to share his Pontiff's fate: "I was your minister," he said, "when you consecrated the blood of Christ: why do you leave me behind, now that you are about to shed your own blood?" His request was granted when, three days later, he died for his Master's sake in the midst of cruel torments. May I be prompted and encouraged by the example and spirit of St. Lawrence, the deacon, to give my life-blood drop by drop, every day, in the service of Him whose redeeming blood I now offer, each morning, on the altar!

## II

1—By my ordination to the Deaconship I was given a share in the priest's ministration to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament: "*Diaconum oportet ministrare ad altare.*" With the priest I offered the wine of the Sacrifice; like the Levites of the Old Law, I ministered to the priest and carried the Ark of the New Covenant, the sacramental Body of Christ, in the ciborium and in the monstrance. I held in my hands Him who holds the Universe by an act of His will, who bore the burden of our sins and now bears us all in His Sacred Heart, whom Mary and Joseph reverently and lovingly carried in their arms. I opened for Him the little door of His humble dwelling on earth, that He might visit the souls of men, nourish them with His own substance, and Himself feed on their love. I laid Him down again in the Tabernacle where He makes Himself the companion of our exile. I exposed Him in the monstrance that He might be seen and adored by His people, and bestow His blessing upon them. How beautiful and consoling are those functions which I still fulfill as a priest! May I value and love them more and more!

As a Deacon, I also shared in the priest's power to purify souls by Baptism, and to enlighten them with the divine truth revealed to us by Christ: *"Diaconum enim oportet baptizare, et prædicare."* Preach and baptize; these were our Blessed Savior's parting words to His Apostles. It was by preaching and baptizing that the Church was to be founded; the Apostles understood this well, and so did those who continued their work in the course of ages. What is the ambition of missionaries in pagan lands, if not to preach and baptize? The rest follows. Although, according to the present discipline of the Church, the Deacon is not allowed to exercise these two functions without special permission from his Bishop, they are however the most important duties imposed upon him at the time of his ordination. St. Stephen preached in Jerusalem, and his zeal cost him his life; St. Vincent preached in Spain, and sealed his labor with his blood; St. Ephrem preached at Edessa, with an eloquence which recalled the power of the first Deacon and martyr. The Deacon is therefore, by right of ordination a minister of the Gospel. He receives the sacred Book from the Bishop's hands, and must read it with reverence and love; he must seek in it, as in the Holy Eucharist, that supernatural strength which is the virtue characteristic of his Order, and which will enable him to fulfill his obligations with courage and generosity.

2—When the Holy Ghost had completed His mysterious work in my soul, I was then clothed in the vestments of my office, the stole and the dalmatic. The *Stole* is the symbol of purity: *"Accipe stolam candidam"*; God Himself laid it upon me through the Bishop's hands, *"de manu Dei."* It is also the symbol of immortality, of that eternal life of glory and bliss which will be the reward of holy souls: "*Redde mihi, Domine, stolam immortalitatis quam perdidi in prævaricatione primi parentis.*" I must therefore prize my stole as the badge of my dignity, as the emblem of purity and immortality.—The *Dalmatic*, which the Deacon wears in the solemn functions of the Liturgy, is the symbol of salvation, joy, and justice: "*Induat te Dominus indumento salutis, et vestimento lætitiæ, et dalmatica justitiæ circumdet te semper.*"

## III

WITH what reverence and zeal do I fulfill my sacred duties concerning the Holy Eucharist, the Word of God, and the Sacrament of Baptism?

*Examination of conscience—Prayer* for the spirit of strength and zeal, through the intercession of the holy Deacons, St. Stephen, St. Lawrence, St. Vincent, St. Ephrem, and St. Francis of Assisi.—*Resolutions:* The Holy Eucharist, my nourishment; Holy Scripture, my light; The Holy Ghost, my strength; The Holy Deacons, my protectors.

"*Adimple ministerium tuum.*"

## 13. THE PRIEST—I. CALL, ADMONITION, ORDINATION

### "SACERDOS IN ÆTERNUM"

## I

"AND it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and He passed the whole night in the prayer of God. And when day was come, He called unto him His disciples, and He chose twelve of them whom also He named Apostles." (Luke vi.

12-13.) What importance Our Lord attached to this step can easily be understood from the manner in which He prepared for it: "He passed the whole night in the prayer of God."

*Acts of adoration and gratitude.*

## II

The long expected day had dawned, at last; the distant vision of which had, for many years, brightened and cheered my ascension to the summit of the Holy Mountain. That day had come which God had appointed for me from all eternity! It was for that day that I was created, that the early years of my life were surrounded with special care and attention by a kind and wise Providence. It was for that day that God had entrusted to His priests the delicate and arduous work of my Christian and sacerdotal training; for that day that I had prayed, labored, and struggled. A great transformation was to take place in my soul: I was about to become God's representative among men, the ambassador of Christ, the partaker of His power, the dispenser of His grace and merits, the keeper and leader of my brethren, the successor of all the holy priests who, for many centuries, have continued Christ's mission in the world. Can I imagine a higher dignity, a more wonderful power, a greater responsibility? These I shall realize still more vividly, as I recall, for a while, the words and rites through which such graces and privileges were conferred upon me.

1—*The Call*—For the eighth and last time, since the day of my Tonsure, I gladly answered the Archdeacon's call, the most momentous of all. "Here I am, O Lord, ready to accept the obligations of the

Priesthood as well as its high dignity, its duties as well as its rights, its responsibilities as well as its powers. I willingly offer myself to Thee, soul and body, to spend and be spent for the noble work which Thou shalt entrust to me. *Adsum!*"

Then came the presentation of the candidates, and the Bishop's inquiry as to their character, still more solemn and searching than it was in the preceding ordination. The world is a stormy sea, and the Church is Peter's bark; she needs trustworthy pilots, since the passengers' lives are in their hands.

2—*Admonition*—Reassured by the Archdeacon's answer and the silent consent of the congregation, the Bishop reads the customary instruction bearing on the dignity and functions of the Order to be conferred: "*Sacerdotem oportet, offerre, benedicere, præesse, prædicare, et baptizare.*" The candidates before him have been selected to rule over God's people, like the seventy ancients chosen by Moses as his helpers, like the seventy-two disciples set apart by Christ as his co-workers. Let them, in spite of their youth, live up to their name (priests, from the Greek "*presbuteroi*" i.e. elders) by their wisdom and the faithful keeping of God's commandments; let them show themselves worthy of their sublime mission by the perfection of their lives, firmly grounded in the twofold love of God and of their neighbor.

The Bishop then recalls the qualities required of a priest: *cælestis sapientia,* wisdom not merely human, but heavenly, proceeding from the light of faith; *probi mores,* a life pure and virtuous in every way, a reputation free from all suspicion; *diuturna justitiæ observatio,* a virtue sufficiently tried to guarantee his perseverance in a life worthy of his sacred character.

As a preventive remedy against the weakness of human nature, when the sweet and strengthening emotions of his ordination and of his First Mass have vanished, let him remember that beautiful and most impressive exhortation on which a priest cannot too frequently meditate, because it is an admirable reminder of his dignity and obligations: "*Agnoscite quod agitis, imitamini quod tractatis.*" If I understand and keep in mind the sublimity of the act which I perform at the altar, the greatness and holiness of Him whom I hold in my hands, every morning, then my Consecrator need not fear; his last wishes shall be fulfilled: "*Sit doctrina vestra spiritualis medicina populo Dei; sit odor vitæ vestræ delectamentum Ecclesiæ Christi; ut prædicatione atque exemplo ædificetis domum, id est, familiam Dei.*"

3—*The Ordination*—The time had come when the great miracle was to be wrought in my soul. The Bishop and the priests present, first one by one, then all together in a most solemn scene, imposed hands upon me, thus imparting to me the character, power, and grace of the Priesthood of which they are the depositaries. They called down upon me the heavenly gifts, the blessing of the Holy Ghost, and the strength of priestly grace. When the Bishop had concluded the solemn Preface in which he asked God almighty to bestow upon me the dignity of the Priesthood and the grace of holiness which it implies, the dream of my youth had been realized, I was a priest for ever, "*Sacerdos in æternum.*"

Have I preserved intact the ideals which were mine on the day of my ordination? If they have fallen to a lower level, what reasons can account for this unhappy change? Is there any point in particular which requires immediate and careful attention on my part?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*
*"Sit odor vitæ vestræ delectamentum Ecclesiæ Christi."*

## 14. THE PRIEST—II. OBLIGATIONS AND POWERS

### "ACCIPE JUGUM DOMINI—ACCIPE POTESTATEM"

### I

"AND turning to His disciples, He said: Blessed are the eyes that see the things which you see. For I say to you that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them." (Luke x. 23-24.)—O Lord, revive in me, to-day, the joy and sweet emotions I derived from what I saw and heard, on the day of my ordination to the Holy Priesthood.

### II

1—*The Vesting*—When the sacred character of the Priesthood had been stamped in my soul, I received the vestments which, henceforward, I would have to wear in performing my priestly functions, the Stole and the Chasuble.

Laying the *Stole* on my shoulders and crossing its two parts on my breast, the Bishop said: *"Accipe jugum Domini."* The holy life I was bound to live, the responsibilities I assumed, the duties I had to fulfill, such was the yoke I had to bear: *"Ecce sacerdos factus es . . . Non alleviasti onus tuum, sed arctiori jam alligatus es vinculo disciplinæ, et ad majorem* *teneris perfectionem sanctitatis.*" (Imit. Chr. 4, v. 2) But, as if conscious of my weakness and fear, the Prelate immediately added: "*Jugum enim meum suave est, et onus meum leve.*" For if the yoke of the Priesthood weighs heavily on him who carries it slothfully, it is light and sweet to the courageous priest endowed with a truly supernatural spirit, who sees, beyond the burden, God, the souls of men, and the triumphs of the Church.

The *Chasuble* is the symbol of charity: "*Accipe vestem sacerdotalem, per quam caritas intelligitur.*" Just as it is laid over the other vestments, so must charity spread over all the other virtues which, as St. Paul says, are nothing without it. Charity is therefore the virtue which characterizes the priestly spirit, since the priest has been consecrated to continue Christ's work, a work of love, since he must, like his divine Master, spend his life, and, if necessary, lay it down for the salvation of his flock.

2—*The Anointing*—After I had been clothed in the sacerdotal garments, one more thing remained to be done for me, before I could perform the most sacred of my priestly functions. The Bishop anointed my hands with the Oil of Catechumens, also used in the ceremonies of Baptism and for the crowning of Christian Kings, while the choir sang the *Veni Creator*, the hymn of the solemn call for light and grace. My hands were thus consecrated, like the chalice and the paten, because they were to touch and hold the immaculate Lamb of God, because a divine virtue was to issue from them as if from the Body of Christ Himself: "*Ut quæcumque benedixerint, benedicantur, et quæcumque consecraverint, consecrentur, et sanctificentur.*" May I never forget, in the practice of my daily life, that my hands have been anointed and consecrated to the Lord!

3—*The Conferring of Powers.*—Then arrived the blessed moment when, after being vested and anointed for the great sacrificial act, I touched the paten and the chalice, while, with deep and sweet emotions, I heard the Bishop say: "*Accipe potestatem offerre sacrificium Deo, Missasque celebrare, tam pro vivis quam pro defunctis.*" At last, I had the power to say Mass! This was perhaps the only end I had in view when I first turned my mind and heart towards the Holy Priesthood. My dream had become a reality; a few minutes later, I was to consecrate the Body and Blood of Christ in union with the Bishop, and henceforth, every day, I was to stand at the altar as a mediator between Heaven and earth! I had then an exalted idea of that truly sublime power. Was it so, a few years, perhaps a few months after my ordination? Is it a rare thing to see a priest offer the Holy Sacrifice with such haste, with such apparent lack of dignity and devotion as to scandalize pious souls, and confirm non-Catholics in their prejudices against the significance and utility of our sacred rites? With a few minutes more at the altar, with greater care and piety on our part in our daily Mass, God will really be glorified, the faithful edified, and those outside the Church attracted by the fitness and beauty of our Liturgy instead of being kept away from us, and prejudiced against us, by a seemingly irreverent and empty form of worship.

At the end of what, in reality, was my first Mass, I still had to be entrusted with one of the most important duties of the Priesthood, as a minister of the Sacrament of Penance. But the power of absolving sinners is so great, and entails such unlimited confidence on the part of the penitents, that, before receiving it, the newly ordained priests must give a public testimony of their faith by reciting aloud the Creed of the Apostles. Their Priesthood, like that of the Apostles, must be built on the solid rock of faith in God the Father, in Christ, and in His Church. Faith must pervade the whole life of a priest; his ministry is a ministry of faith, and his success depends on the strength of his faith; he will devote himself to Christ and to souls in proportion as he believes.

After this public and solemn profession of faith, the Bishop imposed hands upon me, while repeating the words by which Our Lord instituted the Sacrament of Penance: "*Accipe Spiritum Sanctum; quorum remiseris peccata, remittuntur eis; quorum retinueris, retenta sunt.*" I was then in full possession of the sacerdotal power symbolized by the complete unfolding of the chasuble.

One cannot realize what joy and consolation the ministry of the confessional brings to the heart of a good priest, until he has listened to tales of sin, discouragement, and sorrow, and feels, when he leaves the sacred Tribunal, that he has been fulfilling the mission of Him who forgives, strengthens, and comforts, that he has made sinful souls as white as snow, rescued them from the grasp of vice, and raised them from the dead for life eternal.

*Examination of conscience* on the manner in which I offer the Holy Sacrifice and discharge my duties in the confessional—*Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Agnoscite quod agitis; imitamini quod tractatis.*"

## 15. THE PRIEST—III. CHARACTER, MISSION, AND GRACE

### "SACERDOS ALTER CHRISTUS"

### I

"Abide in Me: and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine; you the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing." (John xv. 4-5.) My priesthood is a participation of the priesthood of Christ; it is from Him that I derive my priestly character and power; I shall bear fruit only in so far as I remain united with Christ, the source of my priesthood and of my priestly life.

### II

1.—*Character*—The principal effect of the Sacrament of Order was to impress in my soul the sacerdotal character. Why did my relatives and friends, my former teachers and fellow-students, immediately after my ordination, show me greater respect than they did before? Was it not because they realized that an important change had taken place in me, because their faith discovered in me what God sees and angels admire in my soul, the sacerdotal character? Did that mean that I was not the same *man*, that the dispositions and inclinations which I had received with life, and developed or weakened by personal efforts or self-indulgence, had entirely vanished to make room for a new nature and a new person? No indeed: as men who live their own individual lives, we priests remain, after our ordination, such as we made ourselves before, with the same qualities and virtues, with the same defects and weaknesses. As men who have no longer to care for themselves alone, but also for the spiritual welfare and salvation of others, we are endowed with a *new self*, a new source of life and activity, a new character which is a participation of the character of Christ whose work we must continue on earth. As priests, we act by virtue of Christ's power in which we share. If we had not in us that source of divine energy, we would in vain stand at the altar, and say "*Hoc est Corpus meum,*" the bread in our hands would remain bread; we would in vain sit in the confessional, and say "*Ego te absolvo,*" nothing would be changed in the sinner's soul. Why then are we able to perform those wonderful acts which are so far beyond the power of human nature? Only because Christ's power is in us, and acts through us. We can easily understand how the presence of Christ's power in our souls implies the presence of His dignity and character, and why therefore we can truly say that the priest is another Christ, "*Sacerdos alter Christus.*"

The sacerdotal character is indelible, for Christ's seal cannot be effaced from the soul of a priest: he is a priest for ever. "*Sacerdos in æternum.*" His sacred character shall be the eternal glory of the good priest in heaven, and the eternal shame of the unfaithful priest in hell. If I respect the sacerdotal character in my soul, if I strive to live up to my priestly dignity, I will be respected and honored both in this life and in the world to come.

2.—*Mission*—I share in Christ's sacerdotal character, because I have been appointed to continue Christ's mission among men. To do Christ's work, I must perform certain acts which are far beyond human power and require a divine virtue: "*Sacerdotem enim oportet offerre, benedicere, præesse, prædicare, baptizare.*" Here are, expressed in a few words, all the powers, privileges, and obligations of my priesthood. I am a priest, and therefore:

—I must stand at the altar as a mediator between God and man; I must raise the sacred Host to heaven, and offer in the Chalice the redeeming Blood of Christ, full of His merits and prayers. Through Christ, I must send up to God the tribute of adoration, gratitude, reparation, and love, which all men owe Him, but which many refuse or neglect to pay, and which no one can offer in a manner worthy of the divine Majesty, except through the mediation of our Blessed Savior represented by His priests.

—I must be the Good Shepherd who walks before his sheep and leads them to the good pastures, where Our Lord Himself feeds them with His own Soul and Body.

—I must be the way, the truth, the life; for I must set before my people the example, the doctrine, and the life of Jesus.

—I must be the compassionate Jesus who consoles the afflicted, helps the poor, visits and assists the sick; the merciful Jesus who forgives men their offences.

—I must be the loving Jesus who wants to save all those entrusted to His care; the Jesus who prays, labors, suffers, and lays down His life for their sake.

—I must truly be "another Christ," and be able to say, with St. Paul: "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me."

3.—*Grace*—How can I worthily wear Christ's character in my soul, wisely and efficiently use His power, and faithfully fulfill His mission? Three words of St. Paul fully answer this question: "*Gratia Dei mecum.*" Together with the powers and obligations of the priesthood, I received a strict right to an amount of grace proportioned to the extent of my duties. The more generous and thorough was my preparation to the Holy Priesthood, the better my dispositions at the time of my ordination, the greater is now my right to divine assistance during my priestly life. I have at my disposal an inexhaustible supply of checks on Christ's treasury in Heaven; it remains for me to cash them, every day, by fidelity, care, and real devotion in the performance of my spiritual exercises: Meditation, Mass and Thanksgiving, the divine Office, and all my daily prayers. If my soul has been, at times, poor and weak, I have no one to blame but myself; it is because I failed in my duty as a man of prayer. I have a right to divine grace, but I must ask for it; and I know that, without it, I cannot live the life nor fulfill the mission of a true priest of God.

### III

Have I always respected my priestly character and won respect for it? In my relations with the laity, did I never forget that I was a priest, did I never allow others to forget it? Do I depend not only on my own efforts, but also on the assistance of divine grace, for the success of my work? "*Gratia Dei mecum.*"

*Examination of conscience—Contrition—Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Sacerdos alter Christus.*"

# *II. THE PRIEST'S MORAL LIFE*

## *A.* THE MAN

"IBUNT DE VIRTUTE IN VIRTUTEM"

### 16. NATURAL VIRTUES AND QUALITIES

"*Et Jesus proficiebat sapientia et ætate, et gratia apud Deum et homines.*" (*Luke ii. 52.*)

"*Et Verbum caro factum est, et habitavit in nobis.*" The Word of God made flesh dwelt amongst us, like one of us, "*in nostro mortali corpore.*" He did not shine to mortal eyes in the splendor of His divine glory; He did not wish to arouse man's admiration by a continual display of His divine attributes; but He manifested to us, in all His words and deeds, the beauty and greatness of human nature unimpaired by sin, in order to teach us how we should strive to raise our natural powers from their fallen state, and restore them to their original perfection. Our Blessed Savior gave us the example of energy and constancy in labor, of undaunted courage in the fulfillment of duty, of honesty, truth, and gratitude to our fellow-men, of genuine sympathy with the suffering and sorrowful, of true friendship, of kindness and gentleness to all, of perfect considerateness and unselfishness. Divine perfection in Him did not absorb or hide human virtues and qualities, but raised them to a higher plane and brought them to light. In this respect, as in all others, the disciple must follow in the footsteps of the Master.

*Acts* of *adoration, admiration, praise.*

II

IT IS true that Christian virtues surpass purely natural qualities, in the same proportion as divine grace surpasses human nature in power and excellence. But divine grace, when acting in us, neither destroys nor supplants man's nature; it corrects and guides our natural inclinations, it assists, raises, and perfects our natural powers. The better prepared is the soil which God's grace waters and makes fruitful, the more abundant is the spiritual harvest which it produces.

No one therefore should think that, because he applies himself to the practice of Christian virtues and to the fulfillment of religious duties, he is entitled to neglect the culture of the natural gifts which he has received from God. We are not allowed to leave unproductive and useless the powers and dispositions of mind, heart, and body which Our Creator has entrusted to us; we must so direct and develop them as to make them serve God's glory, our own spiritual progress, and the good of our fellow-men. This is God's will, as made clear to us by Our Lord Himself in the parable of the talents, (Matt. xxv. 14-31); we must strive, every day, to raise and beautify our fallen nature, and restore it to that state of original perfection which adorned it when it came forth from the Creator's hands.

Not only should a priest, with regard to natural virtues and qualities, be equal to the best members of the laity, but he is even more strictly bound than they are to cultivate them in himself, both as a solid foundation for Christian virtue and priestly holiness, and as a condition of success in the exercise of his sacred ministry.

Moreover, those virtues, which remain purely natural with pagans and unbelievers, must be practised in a supernatural manner by us Christians who live by faith. We cannot keep them on a level inferior to the state to which we have been raised by the grace of Baptism, if we wish to use them as means to reach the supreme end of man's life, which is essentially supernatural. Thus considered, the natural virtues acquire for us an incomparably greater value, especially if we strive to practise them in union with Our Lord, in order to draw from Him that life-giving power which alone can make all our actions fruitful.

With what care have I, thus far, endeavored to develop natural virtues and qualities in me? Are there any which I have especially undervalued and neglected?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer to Our Lord considered in His sacred Humanity.*

*"Ibunt de virtute in virtutem."*

## 17. MORAL COURAGE (*Against Human Respect.*)

"NOLITE ERGO TIMERE" (*Matt. x. 31*)

### I

"EVERY one that shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But he that shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven." (Matt. x. 32-33.) "He that shall be ashamed of Me, and of My words . . . , the Son of Man also will be ashamed of him, when He shall come in the glory of His Father." (Mark viii. 38.)

*Act of adoration.*

Far be from me the thought that I should ever knowingly and explicitly deny my Lord and Master, or be ashamed of Him before men. If the mere possibility of such an outrage were suggested to me, I feel that I would at once answer, like Peter: "Yea, though I should die with Thee [O Lord], I will not deny Thee." Yet I know what happened to the Prince of the Apostles, a few hours after his generous and sincere protest. His courage was not up to his good will. Although I can safely hope that I shall avoid Peter's fall, by avoiding his presumption, and by relying on God's grace more than on my own strength, yet are there not circumstances and times, in my life, when having to choose between my conscience and human opinion, I could perhaps be weak enough to surrender the rights of my soul, or some obligation of my priestly office, to a vain fear of censure or criticism, that is, to the tyranny of human respect?

If, for instance, for fear of ridicule on the part of some careless and thoughtless friends, I failed to keep my good resolutions as to regularity and fervor in my spiritual exercises, as to avoiding waste of time, worldly recreations and conversations, criticism of my ecclesiastical superiors and brethren in the priesthood; if, on some occasions, I tried, without sufficient reason, to hide my priestly character under the garb and ways of the layman, would I not, at least indirectly, deny the Master who has chosen me from among men, and ranked me with those whom He called the "salt of the earth and the light of the world"? If, for fear of censure or mockery, I failed to defend my faith when it is attacked in my presence, to undertake works of zeal for the conversion of sinners and heretics, for the preservation and sanctification of my people; if, for the same motive, I relaxed in care and assiduity for the preparation of my instructions to the faithful and the administration of the Sacraments, would I not betray my divine Master and the sacred interests He has intrusted to me?

Thus would I fall a victim to human respect, that sinful shyness which makes a man ashamed of being considered good and dutiful; that vain fear which causes a man to shrink from fulfilling his obligations according to the dictates of conscience, lest he should be ridiculed. To strengthen my convictions against such weakness, it may be well for me to remember that human respect has been truly characterized as contemptible cowardice and shameful slavery.

He who yields to human respect is a coward in the moral order. He clearly knows his duty, and may be sincerely desirous to fulfill it; but he has not the courage of his convictions; he lacks will-power and a spirit of noble independence to ignore the sneer of the mocker and the titter of laughter. He is a slave also; for he is not his own master, but is in the power of others. He is not equal to the task of doing what he wishes, he is not free; and while the courageous man enjoys the blessings of true liberty, the cowardly victim of human respect submits to the shameful evils of slavery. When he has to choose between pleasing God and pleasing man, he bows his head to man's desires and disregards God's will. Like Peter, he trembles at the voice of a servant, and, although unwillingly, yet practically denies his Master.

Will that priest be courageous enough to rebuke the ill-doers and ill-speakers of his flock, who dares not, in his own personal relations, condemn and oppose things which he knows to be positively wrong, stop improper conversations, or at least express his disapproval by words, attitude, or silence? What zeal and authority will he have to lead others in the ways of virtue and piety, if he allows himself to be influenced by bad example and inconsiderate remarks, if he is afraid of asserting firmly his convictions and his independence in that regard?

## III

For me, as for all Christians, the most efficient remedy against human respect is Faith. Just as darkness vanishes before the light of the sun, so does human respect disappear before the light of Faith. For what influence can sneer and sarcasm exert over men who are confronted with the vision of an eternity of bliss or suffering? It is only when the light of Faith grows dim in their minds that men sacrifice duty and religion to the vain fear of human opinion. I will not be numbered among those unfortunates. I want to make the light of Faith shine brightly before men: let it first shine in my own soul, and direct me at every step. I want to teach men to seek strength and comfort in the Sacraments and religious practices of the Church: I must first keep or acquire habits of true and sound piety which no human consideration can weaken or destroy. It is my duty to urge men to obey the laws of God and of his Church: let no fear of human criticism deter me from obeying God's will in regard to my own personal life. I am bound to fight against sin in others and against whatever leads to it: I must therefore be courageous enough to resist evil, by words and acts, in whatever form it may present itself to me.

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*
"*Confortare et esto vir*" (Kings iii, 2-2).

## 18. HONESTY

"DIRIGE NOS IN VIAM JUSTITIÆ." (*Eccli. xxxvi, 19.*)

### I

RATHER than scandalize the collectors of taxes, Jesus chose to use His miraculous power to pay a tribute which He did not owe: "Go to the sea—He said to Peter—and cast in a hook: and that fish which shall first come up, take: and when thou hast opened its mouth, thou shalt find a stater: take that, and give it to them for Me and for thee." (Matt. xvii, 26.) First by example, then by words did Our Lord teach His disciples to respect the laws of justice, and value the interests of their souls above all earthly goods: "If you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?" (Luke xvi, 12.) "If a man will contend with thee in judgment, and take away thy coat, let go thy cloak also unto him." (Matt. v, 40.) His very presence was sufficient to revive in Zacheus, the chief of the publicans, the sense of probity by which he had not always been guided in the discharge of his duties: "If I have wronged any man in anything," said the happy host of Christ—"I restore him four-fold." And Jesus praised him, saying: "This day is salvation come to this house." (Luke xix, 8-9.) I live, every day, in intimate relations with Christ present in the tabernacle, and in my soul by Holy Communion: is not this enough to preserve and develop in me a deep sense of justice and integrity?

### II

IF IT is true that honesty is rare in the world, it must grow and bloom at least in the hearts of Christ's priests and from them spread its seed into the souls of men. Honesty means respect for the rights of others. It is in germ in every human heart; for every man feels that he is bound to respect others' rights, and that others must likewise respect his. Honesty is therefore based on man's nature; without it, man could struggle for life, like an animal served by physical force, but not like one endowed with reason and free-will. So well do we understand the importance of this virtue, that we spontaneously esteem and trust the honest, while, on the contrary, we despise and fear the dishonest.

But if every man bears in his soul the germ of honesty, why then are there so many dishonest people in the world? Because, like any other human virtue, honesty does not grow unless it be planted in good soil, and properly cultivated. The many causes which account for the decay or sterility of that precious germ in man's heart, can be traced back to one deeply rooted evil, human selfishness; like weeds in a garden, selfishness thrives more easily and rapidly in our souls than the good seed, and can therefore stop its growth. It is then important for me to know or remember the various occasions on which the selfish instinct may militate against honesty, in the life of a priest, that I may the better avoid its snares.

Would I be honest, for instance, if I neglected the care of the Church property entrusted to me, whether land, or buildings, or money, or furniture, or objects used in divine worship? Would I not deserve to be considered an unfaithful steward?—Would I be honest, if in managing the finances of the Parish, I did not make a sufficiently clear distinction between Church funds and what belongs to me personally, if my accounts were not carefully and strictly kept? Would I be honest, if I did not faithfully apply the money contributed by the people to the very ends for which it was given?—Would I be honest, if, with no better reasons than neglect or self-gratification, I delayed the payment of my debts to the prejudice of my creditors?

I clearly realize that a priest cannot allow himself to be careless in paying his bills, unscrupulous in the management of Church funds and property, or to become entangled in speculations of a suspicious nature, thus not only exposing himself to transgress the laws of justice, but also to scandalize the laity who naturally look up to him for good example in all things.

### III

I WILL therefore consider it one of my essential duties to be so thoroughly honest, on all occasions, as to avoid even the least suspicion of dishonesty: I will never allow myself to be lured into more or less dishonest or dubious proceedings, with the false excuse of skill or expediency. To the miserable profit which might be derived from a dishonest act I will prefer the peace of soul, the esteem and confidence of men, and the blessing of God, which are the reward of an honest conscience.

*Examination of conscience—Special resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Dirige nos in viam justitiæ."*

## 19. TRUTH

*"Ego veni in mundum ut testimonium perhibeam veritati."* (*John xviii, 37.*)

## I

"I AM the truth—For this was I born, and for this came I into the world: that I should give testimony to the truth." Thus spoke our Blessed Savior; since I share in His sacerdotal character, since I have been appointed to continue His mission among men, it is clearly my duty to reflect the adorable Person of my divine Master, who called Himself "the truth," in my speech, in my life, and in my work.

*Acts of Faith, Adoration, Praise.*

## II

I EASILY understand the reason why Pilate could neither know nor recognise the truth, even when Truth itself confronted him in the Person of Christ; his "*quid est veritas*" was natural from the lips of a man born and educated in the darkness of paganism. But I have been enlightened by the light of faith through the grace of Baptism, and that light has been fed and made brighter in me by Christian education and priestly training. I know therefore that all truth has its source in Him who is called, in the Psalms, "the God of truth," and by Christ "Truth itself,"—"*Ego sum veritas.*" Since God has made me after His own image and likeness, if I offend against truth, I deface God's image in my soul and choose to resemble Satan, the father of lies. I also abuse one of God's most precious gifts to man. For God has given me the power of speech, that I may easily communicate with my fellow-men and spread the light of truth in the world: if I offend against truth, I spread darkness instead of light, thus defeating the purpose of my Creator. Should I wonder then at these words of Holy Writ: "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord?" Should I wonder at the dreadful punishment inflicted upon Ananias and Sapphira by the Prince of the Apostles whom they had tried to deceive?

If God hates lying because it is directly opposed to His nature and to His designs over men, He abhors it also because it is an *injustice*. The human mind has been made for truth; in order to live its normal life it must therefore feed on truth. But whosoever tries to deceive his neighbor, thereby attempts to deprive him of the nourishment which his mind requires, and consequently violates one of his most essential rights. Undoubtedly, we are always allowed, and sometimes bound in conscience, to protect ourselves and others against unjustifiable curiosity and indiscretion; we have a right to keep our own secrets and are bound not to reveal those entrusted to us; however, there exists no opposition between the sacredness of secrets and the law of truth.

I should therefore remember that the close relations, which the power of speech has established among men, forbid us using so wonderful a gift for deceiving one another. The injustice of a lie is far reaching: it does not extend only to individuals, but undermines the very foundation of human society, for no community can prosper or even subsist, unless its members can trust one another.

## III

As a minister of Christ, *the Truth,* and as one whose duty it is to make known to men the truth revealed by the Son of God, I must have and show a deep respect for truth, in my own personal life as well as in the discharge of my priestly duties. I feel that I would not tell a deliberate lie in matters of any importance; but if I happened to offend against truth, either slightly or inadvertently, I should not fail, following the advice of St. Francis of Sales, to correct at once my statement by some explanation or reparation.—I should not keep back a part of the truth so as to convey a false impression; for the suppression of the truth is the suggestion of the untrue.—I should not remain silent when duty requires me to speak; this would be a lie of omission or concealment.—I should avoid the use of equivocation which is often a lie in disguise: "Let your language be open and sincere, without the least mixture of equivocation, artifice, or dissimulation. For the children of God walk uprightly, and their heart is without guile. "*St. Francis of Sales.*—I should be on my guard against heterodox doctrine and erroneous opinion, in study, teaching, and conversation, and never compromise with them.—Finally, I should not be afraid of preaching or stating the Gospel's truth, from the pulpit or in the confessional.

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*
*"Ego veni in mundum ut testimonium perhibeam veritati."*

## 20. DUTY

"IN HIS QUÆ PATRIS MEI SUNT, OPORTET ME ESSE."

(*Luke ii. 49.*)

### I

JESUS, being twelve years old, went to Jerusalem, with Mary and Joseph, for the solemn feast of the Pasch. "When they returned, the child Jesus remained in Jerusalem; and his parents knew it not. And thinking that he was in the company, they came a day's journey, and sought him among their kinsfolks and acquaintance. And not finding him, they returned into Jerusalem, seeking him. And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions. . . . And his mother said to him: Son, why hast thou done so to us? behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said to them: How is it that you sought me? did you not know that *I must be about my father's business?*" (Luke II, 41-51). To obey the call of duty, Jesus did not hesitate to inflict upon his holy parents great hardships, deep anxiety and sorrow, thus teaching us that God's interests must be cared for, first of all, even to the prejudice of what is dearest to us in this world. Then "he went down with them, and came to Nazareth: and was subject to them." God must be served first, then men also must have their due.

*Acts of adoration, love.*

## II

Duty (*debitum,* that which is due) is a debt we owe God and our fellow-men. As a man, a Christian, and a priest, I have received from God whatever good I possess, life with special endowments of soul and body, the priceless gift of faith, the sublime dignity and wonderful power of the priesthood. These treasures have been entrusted to me, not to be used or abused for self-gratification and selfish interest, but to be directed to one definite purpose set for me, in

God's designs, as for every man, Christian, and priest. Hence arise for me numerous obligations, a sacred debt to the Giver of all goods, which are summed up in the word *duty*. My duty to God and men is revealed to me, as a man, by the inner voice of my conscience; as a Christian, I know it from the teaching of Our Lord and of His Church; as a priest, I have learned it during the years of my Seminary training, and I learn it now from the laws and directions of the Church, from the decisions and orders of my ecclesiastical superiors. I cannot allege ignorance as an excuse from the fulfillment of duty; for, except in some extraordinary cases, ignorance in this regard would itself be an offence against duty.

Constant and prompt response to duty, that "stern daughter of the voice of God," implies on my part the spirit and habit of self-denial and self-sacrifice. For the call of duty often conflicts with my natural tendency to avoid effort and hardship, to seek ease, comfort, and pleasure. Whenever I am called upon to pay my debt to God and men, I must be ready to respond promptly and generously, whatever the cost may be. Was not this a disposition implied in the "*Adsum*" which I gladly answered on the days of my ordinations? Duty first, duty before my own interest and satisfaction, this must be the leading principle of my life. The harder is the effort, the deeper and more painful is the wound which duty may, at times, inflict upon me, the greater also shall be for me, even in this world, the reward promised to the faithful servant; for there is no truer and sweeter joy, on earth, than that of duty courageously and entirely fulfilled.

On what occasions am I particularly inclined to sacrifice duty to pleasure, comfort, personal interest, or timidity?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Euge, serve bone et fidelis"*

## 21. PRIESTLY DIGNITY

"SAPIENTIA HOMINIS LUCET IN VULTU EJUS."

(*Eccles. viii. I.*)

### I

I CAN easily picture to myself the simple and attractive dignity of our Blessed Lord, as He journeyed over the roads and paths of Judæa and Galilee, as He stood in the midst of wondering multitudes, teaching them His heavenly doctrine, healing the sick and casting out evil spirits, as He sat at table in the friendly home of Lazarus, or ate with publicans and sinners in the house of Levi, under the scrutinizing glance of hostile pharisees. I cannot think of Jesus' external appearance as being cold and overbearing, not even as expressing His divine power and authority in such a manner as to awe or intimidate the friends who lived with Him and the crowds that gathered around Him; but I see in Him a simple, kindly, and gentle reserve which inspired both respect and love, which repelled no one, but attracted all: "*Apparuit inter homines modestus Dominus majestatis.*"—*St. Bernard.*

*Acts of adoration and love.*

### II

A PRIEST'S external appearance, manners, and speech, should be suggestive of his sacred character, functions, and internal dispositions. A man who shares in Christ's dignity and power, who stands at the altar as a mediator between God and men, who sits as a judge in the Tribunal of Penance, who is the herald of God's truth in the pulpit, and the dispenser of His grace through the Sacraments, cannot look, act, and speak in the same manner as those whose time and activity are taken up by temporal cares and interests, still less as those whose lives are absorbed by the enjoyments and pleasures of this world. If a physician, or a magistrate, or a statesman feels bound to surround himself with a certain dignity in deportment, manners, and speech, how much more is not this expected of God's priest? The Church has often reminded her ministers of this obligation, in particular through the voice of the Council of Trent: "*Sic decet omnes clericos, in sortem Domini vocatos, vitam moresque suos omnes componere, ut habitu, gestu, incessu, sermone, aliisque omnibus rebus, nihil nisi grave, moderatum, ac religione plenum prae se ferant.*" (Sess. xii—Cap. I.)

An easy and free bearing or gait, a sportive or playful disposition, a certain lack of restraint in manners and speech is readily excused in a layman, especially in a youth. But it is not so in the case of a priest; for such levity would stand in clear and shocking contrast with his sacred character and holy office. We are all naturally inclined to judge of a man's internal worth from his external behavior; a priest is no exception to the rule; whether old or young, he must not only *be*, but also *show* himself serious and priestly.

Worldly taste or carelessness in dress, contrary to Church regulations, a sprightly and thoughtless deportment, an unrestrained tone of voice, frivolous topics of conversation, incorrect language, a frequent use of popular expressions, a free participation in games and recreations not in keeping with his high station and duties, would undoubtedly keep from a priest much of the respect and consideration due to his sacred character. Laymen might welcome him as a cheerful and pleasant companion, but would not give him their unbounded confidence as a priest; to seek advice in their spiritual difficulties, to lay down the burden of their sins, they would rather go to a man whose external conduct manifests, in every way, the serious dispositions expected of Christ's ministers. On the other hand, they would be repelled or kept away by exaggerated reserve and dignity implying coldness, or haughtiness, or a domineering spirit. The external conduct of a Catholic priest must therefore be characterized, like that of his divine Master, by a simple, kindly, and gentle dignity, such as does not exclude cheerfulness properly restrained.

Do I possess this quality? On what particular point, and to what extent is it lacking in me?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Nihil fiat quod cujusquam offendat aspectum."*

(St. Augustine.)

## 22. A PRIEST'S TIME

"TEMPUS PRETIUM ÆTERNITATIS"

### I

TO FULFILL his sublime mission and give us the example of a most laborious life, our Blessed Lord employed, for the glory of His Father and the salvation of souls, every minute of the time He spent on earth in a mortal body. Works of mercy and might, long and tiresome journeys, the preaching of divine truth, the instructing and training of His Apostles, occupied every hour of the day, while the night was often entirely spent in prayer: "*Erat pernoctans in oratione Dei.*" I see Jesus sitting on the edge of the well, in Samaria, "*fatigatus ex itinere*"; when His disciples urge Him to take nourishment, I hear Him answer: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, that I may perfect His work" (John iv, 34). He never gave a moment of His life to His own pleasure and satisfaction, "*Christus non sibi placuit.*" (Rom. xv, 3); His only occupation was to please His Father: "*Quae placita sunt ei, facio semper.*" (John viii, 29.) What a lesson, and what an example for me!

*Acts of adoration, praise.*

## II

Do I sufficiently realize the value of time, that impalpable and mysterious thing which comes to us from God and returns with us to God, either blank and empty, or marked and filled with the record of our good and evil deeds, desires, and thoughts imprinted upon it as it flies before us, and which, when unrolled at the tribunal of the Supreme Judge, will determine our fate for ever. Time is then truly the *seed of eternity,* and I am the sower.

I am also one of those to whom God said, in the person of the father of the human race: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread"; I am therefore, like other men, subject to the universal law of labor. Even if I were exempt from it, could I be so selfish and sluggish as to spend the days of my life in either complete or relative idleness, while others are at work to supply me with the necessaries and comforts of life? Would I not be ashamed to accept the services of my fellow-men, to profit by their work, and meanwhile remain inactive and useless to society when I am able to do my share? I would thus rightly incur the censure and contempt of men, the reproof of my own conscience, and the malediction of Him who cursed the barren fig tree.

If society demands my work as a debt owed to its members, greater still is my obligation to the Church. As a priest, my time does not belong to me; I have consecrated it to God and souls when offering myself for the work of the sacred ministry. I know that the eternal destiny of many depends on the use I shall make of my life. Life is too short and valuable, especially the life of a priest, to be wasted even in part; there is so much to be done to make the world better, to set and direct men on the way to eternal happiness, that every minute of my time is required for me to do my share in the great work to which I have devoted my life, and to prepare my own record for the awful day when I shall hear the Master say: "Give an account of thy stewardship."

I know, moreover, that as idleness is the nurse of sin and the mother of vice, so is work a sure protection and impenetrable shield against evil. If the powers of my mind and body are constantly occupied in doing God's work, my soul will be like a strong fortress which the enemy cannot enter, because its approaches and gates are carefully guarded.

## III

I MUST then labor diligently and constantly for the interests of God, of society, of the Church, and of my own soul. This means that I am not allowed to waste my time in inactivity of mind and body, in useless thoughts, in light reading, in frequent visits and journeys not related to my duties, in unnecessary amusements and recreations. This means that I should not waste my time in doing things which, although good in themselves, are unsuited to my state and condition, or of no account for the work which I have been appointed to do. This means also that I should not waste my time in working without a definite purpose, or for human glory, or for the mere satisfaction I may find in activity and success; but that I should direct all my thoughts, plans, and efforts to the great end of my priestly life, the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

Has my life, thus far, been usefully employed? What part of the week or of the day am I especially inclined to waste, and for what reasons?

Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer. "*Labora sicut bonus miles Christi Jesu.*" (Tim. ii, 3.)

## 23. STUDY—I MOTIVES

### "VOS ESTIS LUX MUNDI"

### I

JESUS, says St. John, "was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world." (I-9.) That light shone brightly for a few years, in a small and poor but highly privileged country; then its divine rays, reflected through the apostles and their successors, spread over the earth and enabled millions of human beings to walk in the splendor of God's immutable truth. I am one of those to whom Christ said: "You are the light of the world," thus entrusting to them the mission of carrying His light to the utmost confines of the earth, to dispel the darkness of error and sin, "*lux in tenebris lucet.*" May I fully realize the extent and importance of the obligations imposed upon me by this sacred office!

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, self-offering.*

## II

A LIGHT I must be, first by the example of a holy life. But if St. Paul, who thoroughly understood the mission of an apostle, wrote to his disciple Timothy: "Be thou an example to the faithful," he also added: "Attend unto reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine" (I Tim. iv, 13,) thus reminding Timothy of the Master's command "Teach ye all nations," and consequently of the obligation for him to prepare for this important office. I am bound by the same duty to be a man of study as well as a man of prayer and action, that I may safely lead to heaven the souls whose guidance has been confided to me, and honor the Church by my learning as well as by my character.

Is it necessary to convince a physician who understands the value of human life, and sincerely desires to relieve the sufferings of his fellow-men, that he must continue to study in order to keep up with the progress of medical science? Is it necessary to remind a judge who has a deep respect for the rights of his fellow-citizens, and a sincere love of justice, that he must study the laws of his country until he has mastered them and is able to apply them wisely? Is it not still more superfluous to urge a priest, who knows the price of human souls, to study for them the science of salvation? A priest must teach and lead. The human will needs a guide, and this guide is the human intellect. It is my duty and privilege to labor that each human intellect may become an enlightened and safe guide to each human will; thus can I really be, like my divine Master, the light of the world. Moreover, I am a member of a great body, the Catholic Clergy; I am one of the officers and leaders of a great society, the Catholic Church. Especially in a country where comparison between Catholics and Protestants, priests and ministers, is unavoidable, the honor of the Catholic Church is at stake, and it is for me a duty to uphold it by constant and serious efforts to cultivate my mental powers and increase the sum of my knowledge.

It is true that the charge of ignorance and obscurantism is, nowadays, seldom brought against the Catholic Clergy. Our opponents no longer slight us; but they study, discuss, and often disfigure our belief and doctrine, in order the more easily to attack and undermine them in the name of science. We must therefore be ready to meet them on the same ground; we must spare no effort to enlarge the number of those learned priests whose prestige and knowledge compel our adversaries to respect and even to admire the Catholic Church. "To advance the kingdom of God," says a holy and learned bishop, "we must measure ourselves with our fellow-men, that is, we must measure our knowledge with theirs. We are not expected to learn all that which scientists know; but if in brain power, length of reach, solidity and trustworthiness, we are not fairly on their level, we shall make little way." (*Hedley*—Lex Levitarum.)

If I am not called upon to play the important and delicate part of an apologist, if my bent of mind or the absorbing duties of the sacred ministry do not allow me to undertake such special studies as could make me a real scholar, I still remain bound to be a learned priest, for the honor of the Church and the spiritual welfare of my people. It is by study that I shall mature and strengthen my mental powers, that my preaching will become more substantial and persuasive, my conversation more attractive and useful; it is by study that I shall enable myself to solve the difficulties of those within the fold, and give a satisfactory answer to the many objections usually brought against the Church by heretics or unbelievers. If I strive after knowledge, the faithful will have more respect for my character and greater confidence in my direction; the esteem in which they will hold me will honor the Church whose minister and representative I am.

Am I sufficiently convinced of the obligation for a priest to apply himself to study? What has been, to this day, my attitude and practice in this regard?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.* "*Labia sacerdotis custodient scientiam*" (Mal. ii, 7).

## 24. STUDY—II. OBJECT AND PURPOSE

"SIT DOCTRINA VESTRA MEDICAMENTUM ECCLESIAE CHRISTI." (*Pontifical*)

"And now, O ye priests, this commandment is to you. . . . The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth. (Malach. ii, 1-7). "Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will reject thee, that thou shalt not do the office of the priesthood to Me." (Osee iv, 6). Thus spoke the prophets to the priests of the Old Law, whose duty it was to lead their own people, a small nation of simple and illiterate men, in the way of the Lord. How much more binding is this commandment upon the priests of the New Law, whose mission it is to teach and guide all nations, in a world proud of its culture and achievements in the various fields of human knowledge! The Church therefore, through the voice of her Councils and Pontiffs, has always urged her ministers to seek knowledge in earnest study: *"Assiduitate lectionum instructi sint clerici ordinati,"* and she has bestowed special honors on those who, in spite of their many duties in the care of souls, distinguished themselves by their talent and learning as well as by their holiness.

## II

I realize that study is one of the important duties of my priestly life, and I am determined not to neglect it. But I shall undoubtedly waste a considerable part of my time and energy, unless I have a clear idea of the object and purpose to which I must direct my attention and efforts, in order to make study profitable with regard to my ministry.

When Our Lord commanded His Apostles to go forth and teach all nations, He did not mean that they should teach men the secrets of nature and art, but the science of salvation; "Preach the Gospel to all creatures." We cannot blame a physician for not having made a special study of civil law; a lawyer is not expected to be proficient in medicine or theology. In like manner, a priest is not, as a rule, strictly bound to possess a competent knowledge of natural sciences, literature, and fine arts; but he must know that which he has to teach, he must specialize in the branches of knowledge which are connected with the fulfilment of his priestly office. The sacred and ecclesiastical sciences must therefore be the first and principal object of my studies. I shall find in them an immense field open to my mental activity, as well as a source of pure and refined pleasure.

Yet, if the Church has always given her special care and attention to the things of the invisible world, in accordance with her mission, she has never ceased to take an interest in the matters of a purely natural and scientific order. For many centuries, she alone preserved and increased the treasures of human knowledge. She could have buried them for ever in her silent cloisters; on the contrary, she multiplied schools and universities to make them known and allow every one to draw from them plentifully. Nowadays, in every civilized country, there can be found scholars and specialists in nearly all branches of the secular sciences, among the members of the Catholic Clergy; and priests in general are convinced that science is a power which they can neither ignore nor leave entirely in the hands of the enemies of the Church, but must themselves acquire and use to direct men more surely to God, the infinite source of all knowledge.

If then God has given me a special aptitude for certain branches of secular knowledge, I should not bury my talent, but develop it and make it bear fruit for God and souls, whenever time and circumstances allow me to do so. Science is good in itself: it comes from God, and, when rightly understood and used, (far from interfering with our duties to Him,) it can lead us to God. It is not science, but human pride which leads men away from religion.

Moreover, no one can doubt that secular learning brings a priest prestige, and thus enables him to exert a greater influence over Catholics, Protestants, and unbelievers. A priest's wide and deep learning is, not unfrequently, the most efficient demonstration of the truth of our Holy Religion in the eyes of those who reject it, or whose faith is assailed and shaken by scientific objections; it helps in removing prejudices from the minds of the former and gives confidence to the latter.

What wonderful influence can such a large, well organized, and well disciplined army as that of the Catholic Priesthood exert over society, if every priest strives, according to his own means and opportunities, to make himself what he ought to be, a light for the world, *lux mundi*.

What are my present dispositions towards sacred or secular knowledge? Have I a clear and practical plan of study, a definite purpose in mind? What obstacles must I overcome?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Erat lucerna ardens et lucens.*" (John v, 35.)

## 25. VACATIONS AND RECREATIONS

"VENITE SEORSUM . . . ET REQUIESCITE PUSILLUM."
(*Mark vi. 31.*)

### I

WHO can understand the limits of human energy and activity better than He who, after creating man and seeing his physical and mental powers weakened by sin, deigned to put on a human form and live on earth the life of a man? I am not surprised then, when I read about Jesus kindly and thoughtfully inviting His Apostles to suspend their labor and retire to solitude, to rest a little while with Him: "Come apart into a desert place, and rest a little. For there were many coming and going: and they had not so much as time to eat. And going up into a ship, they went into a desert place apart." (Mark vi. 31-32.)

*Acts of adoration and gratitude.*

## II

No one therefore can find fault with a priest who, after faithfully discharging the duties of his ministry, allows himself a few hours of recreation, every week, and a few days or weeks of rest, every year. This practice is not only legitimate, but necessary.

"The bow that's always bent will quickly break;
But if unstrung 'twill serve you at your need.
So let the mind some relaxation take
To come back to its task with fresher heed."
(*Phædrus.*)

A vacation therefore (*vacare:* to be free from work and care), a recreation (*recreare,* to refresh), is a relaxation and refreshment of the mind and body following the sustained efforts required for the entire and earnest fulfilment of duty; by keeping the body in a healthy state, and taking the mind away, for a while, from absorbing preoccupations and cares, it greatly contributes in making work easier and more profitable.

Unfortunately we are by nature inclined to excess, and, at times, by abuse we make evil that which in itself is good. Travels, games, recreations of various sorts, are not meant to be an end but only a means, and consequently ought not to occupy a prominent place in our lives. When they take up a considerable portion of our time, and break into our regular work; when they assume an importance to which they have no claim, in our thoughts, conversations, and reading; when, in short, they seem so to shape our mind and influence our conduct as to become a preoccupation and necessity, then they pass the line of moderation and cease to be a blessing. From the point of view of my ministry, recreations must bring me more than they take away from me; this is the real test of their worth. Such indeed will be the advantage which I shall derive from them, if I partake of them at the right time, in the proper place, and without any prejudice to the discharge of my duties.

While thus engaged in giving my mind and body the rest which they require, with the approval of my ecclesiastical superiors, and after making sure that my absence will not be prejudicial to the souls entrusted to me, I should never lose sight of my priestly character. There are worldly resorts and places of amusements which a priest should avoid. Either in travel or in games, a priest should usually prefer the company of his brethren in the priesthood, lest the familiarity displayed on such occasions should diminish the respect which laymen must have for him and the confidence they place in him. In any case, a priest should remember and carefully observe the rules of ecclesiastical dignity and propriety in speech and conduct.

I should also bear in mind that, even when I am exempted from active work, there can be for me no vacation concerning my duties to God. I would indeed show little gratitude to the Lord for the rest He allows me, if I then neglected to praise Him and pray to Him. When our Blessed Savior granted His Apostles a few moments of relaxation, He did not say: "Go away from Me, and rest," but "*come with Me* and take your rest in My presence." In like manner, while enjoying a lawful and perhaps much needed vacation, I should not dismiss God from my thoughts, but try to remain united with Him by means of my usual prayers, especially the divine Office and, whenever circumstances permit, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, making my own the desire and prayer of the two disciples on their way to Emmaus: "*Mane nobiscum, Domine.*"

Thus understood, my vacation will be none the less restful and pleasant, while, at the same time, contributing to my own spiritual welfare and the efficiency of my work.—Are these the dispositions with which I usually spend my vacations and take my recreations?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Esse cum Jesu dulcis paradisus.*" (Imit. ii—8.)

## 26. FRIENDSHIP

"MANDATUM NOVUM DO VOBIS, UT DILIGATIS INVICEM SICUT DILEXI VOS." *(John xiii. 34)*

### I

DIVINE love did not absorb or stifle in Jesus the inclinations of the human heart in their purest and highest form. We know that Christ loved all men to the extent of giving His life for them; yet, says St. Francis of Sales, "no one can deny but that He loved St. John and Lazarus with a more sweet and more special friendship." It was that special friendship that often led Him to Bethany where He was always welcomed with the greatest reverence and love; it was that same friendship which allowed "the disciple whom Jesus loved" to rest his head on the Master's heart at the Last Supper, when the hour of parting had come, and prompted Our Lord to call His Apostles "friends": *"Jam non dicam vos servos . . . Vos autem dixi amicos."* (John xv. 15.)—I know then, from Jesus' example, that while as a Christian I must love all men, while as a priest I must particularly bear in my heart those entrusted to my care, yet, like my divine Master, I am allowed to have my special friends.

*Acts of adoration and love.*

## II

No sentiment of the human soul has ever been more highly praised, more carefully and deeply analyzed, and more beautifully described by writers of all ages, either pagan or Christian, than that of friendship; for there is nothing in the world, among natural goods and blessings, which we esteem and value more than the possession of a real friend. We read in the Bible that "A faithful friend is a strong defense; and he that hath found him, hath found a treasure" (Eccli. vi. 14).—"It is the solace of this life," says St. Ambrose, "to have one to whom you can open your heart and tell your secrets; to win to yourself a faithful man who will rejoice with you in sunshine, and weep with you on cloudy days."—"Friendship is excellent," writes St. Francis of Sales, "because it comes from God, because it leads to God, and because it shall last eternally in God."

But friendship, to be true and beneficial, must be founded on virtue and lead to virtue; this was understood even by pagan philosophers of ancient times. "Friendship," says Plato, "is established only between souls; it is in virtue that its value lies. It requires that those who are friends do good to one another, that they give themselves up for one another's sake; for friendship feeds on devotedness and self-denial; but there is no devotedness, no self-denial except in virtue. "This beautiful doctrine, confirmed and perfected by the teaching and example of Christ, of His Apostles and of their successors throughout ages, has often been re-echoed by the best spiritual writers of our modern times: "Have no friendship except for those that communicate with you the things of virtue; and the more exquisite the virtues are which shall be the matter of your communications, the more perfect shall your friendship be." (*St. Francis of Sales.*)

Blessed therefore is the priest who has found, especially among his brethren in the priesthood, one whom he can truly call his friend; one to whom he can go for advice in his difficulties, upon whose sympathy and assistance he can rely in his sorrows and troubles, to whom he can communicate his plans and hopes, with whom he can share his joy, spend the restful period of his vacation, and the few hours of relaxation he allows himself every week.

He must choose that friend wisely, without haste; but once he has found him he should remain faithful to him, and not abandon him through levity or for any momentary displeasure. We must indeed be ready to suffer for our friends; but we must also be willing to suffer *from* them, that is, to bear patiently with their defects and shortcomings, as we expect them to bear with ours. Tried friendship is too valuable to be lightly broken.

Yet, like all the goods of this world, human friendship is insufficient to meet fully man's needs and aspirations. A friend is not always able to advise us rightly, to protect us efficiently, to console and assist us adequately; and the time comes when we must part from him. Fortunately, a priest has with him, in the tabernacle of his church, a Friend whose power, kindness, and fidelity can never fail him, and who can never be taken away from him. "Jesus Christ alone," says the author of the *Imitation*, "is singularly to be loved, who alone is found good and faithful above all friends." (II. viii. 4.) "Without a friend thou canst not well live, and if Jesus be not thy friend above all, thou wilt be exceedingly sad and desolate." (*Ibid.*) Jesus is always present with me; I can find Him at any hour of the day or of the night. There is no difficulty He cannot solve for me, no sorrow He cannot soothe, no help He cannot give, since He is almighty, infinitely compassionate and kind. Should all my friends fail me or abandon me, or be taken away from me, still Jesus will remain with me so long as I do not drive Him away by sin; in Him I can find all that my heart desires, and enjoy even on earth a taste of heaven's bliss. "*Esse cum Jesu dulcis paradisus.*" (*Imit.* II-viii. 2.)

Is my friendship founded on virtue and on Jesus' love? How do I fulfill the duties of friendship? Do I consider and treat Our Lord as my best friend?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Caritate fraternitatis invicem diligentes.*" (Rom. xii. 10.)

## 27. UNSELFISHNESS

"SI QUIS VULT POST ME VENIRE, ABNEGET SEMETIPSUM"
*(Matt. xvi. 24)*

### I

OUR Lord spent the few years of His life on earth in doing good to others: "*Transiit benefaciendo,*" and the supreme act of His public ministry was a deed of utter self-sacrifice. Christ is the great type and pattern of unselfishness, "*Christus non sibi placuit*" (St. Paul); His Apostles showed, in life and death, that they had inherited His spirit of self-denial; after them, the Church has never lacked great and noble souls totally unmindful of their own interest, comfort, and pleasure, and entirely devoted to the spiritual and temporal welfare of their fellow-men. In our own days, we find striking examples of unselfishness and self-devotion in such men as Father Matthew visiting hospitals, garrets, and hovels, in time of pestilence, regardless of danger; Father Damien, the heroic apostle of the lepers of Molokai; Don Bosco, the father of the orphans; thousands of Sisters and Brothers devoting themselves to the care of the sick, the poor, and the aged, to the difficult and arduous task of educating the youth; thousands of missionaries who have given up the joys and comfort of home and country for the salvation of the heathen; thousands of zealous priests, at home, ever placing the care of their flock above their own interest, ease, and satisfaction. Those have truly understood the words of their divine Master: "*Si quis vult post me venire, abneget semetipsum*"; they are utterly unselfish, and so must I be if the spirit of Christ dwells in me.

## II

UNSELFISHNESS is a distinctively human quality. In animals there is no power, except at times the parental instinct, to counteract and check their innate tendency to seek, in every thing, the satisfaction of their needs and desires; while, in man, the higher powers can check and control the impulses and inclinations of the lower nature. Yet, unselfishness, although special to human beings, can hardly be considered as natural to man; for in man also there is a deep-seated instinct of self-preservation and a craving for self-satisfaction which make their claims strongly felt. A man may be naturally brave, honest, generous; but he does not seem to be naturally unselfish. It is true that the germ of unselfishness lies hidden in his higher faculties of mind and heart; but it must be cultivated to develop and rise above the self-seeking impulses of his physical nature. This is a truly difficult task which no human authority can impose upon us, and which, in most cases, is above man's natural power. "Besides the duties of justice, says a well known philosopher [Victor Cousin], there are duties of devotion which are not governed by precise rules. Devotion, heroism, sacrifice, are moral luxuries, necessary and obligatory luxuries, but which cannot be imposed under the form of law."

It was reserved for Christ to do what human authority is unable to accomplish, namely, to teach us by words and example that we must deny ourselves for the sake of others, and, if need be, lay down our life for our brethren. Unselfishness is, therefore, especially a Christian virtue or disposition, not prescribed by any particular commandment, but required for the complete observance of God's law, and essential to a truly Christian life. It is then to Christ's example that we must look, on Christ's help that we must depend to develop in us the spirit of unselfishness and self-denial.

## III

As a man bound, like all others, by duties to my fellow-men, I can find many opportunities to practise unselfishness, since selfish tendencies manifest themselves in many details of my daily life. But it is especially in relation to my priestly duties that I must be on my guard against selfishness, and always ready to check its impulses.

An unselfish priest does not expect, and still less seeks the best field of labor, regardless of the desires and merits of others. In this respect, as in other matters, he accepts ungrudgingly the decisions of his Bishop as the expression of God's will.

He does not consider his functions with a view to human glory and temporal advantages, but in the light of faith and in the spirit of his priesthood.

When appointed to labor in common with other priests, he does not try to secure for himself the easiest and most pleasant duties, while leaving to others the heaviest and most ungrateful functions. But he bravely and generously accepts the share of the work assigned to him, and does not hesitate, if need be, to help or replace his co-workers.

Far from nourishing feelings of jealousy or wounded pride against his fellow-priests, he rejoices at their success, because God is glorified and souls benefited by their work, and finds in their example a new source of energy and courage for the fulfilment of his own duties.

He is always ready to sacrifice his own preference, interest, comfort, and enjoyment, to his duty, to the spiritual and even temporal welfare of those entrusted to his care.

By the constant practice of self-denial he is gradually freed from the claims of his lower nature, and is thus enabled to devote himself entirely and successfully to the service of God and souls.

Are these my own dispositions? To what extent, and on what points do I resemble the unselfish priest, or differ from him?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Christus non sibi placuit."*

## B. THE CHRISTIAN AND THE PRIEST

### 28. FAITH

"SINE FIDE IMPOSSIBLE EST PLACERE DEO" *(Hebr. xi. 6)*

I

"AND the Apostles said to the Lord: Increase our faith. And the Lord said: If you had faith like to a grain of mustard-seed, you might say to this mulberry-tree: Be thou rooted up, and be thou transplanted into the sea: and it would obey you" (Luke xvii. 5-6). The Apostles realized that their faith was still weak, and asked Jesus to increase this precious gift in their souls; for they had no doubt about its necessity and power. They had heard Our Lord praise the faith of the leper He had cleansed, of the centurion whose servant He healed, of the Phenician woman whose daughter He freed from a devil. They were present when Christ, before restoring their sight to the two blind men, required faith on their part as a condition; the Apostles themselves were asked to express their belief in the divine mission of their Master. The religion of Christ is founded on faith, and the power of faith lies especially in the sacrifice it implies on our part.

*Acts of adoration and faith.*

## II

1—*Faith is a sacrifice.*—Faith is essential to religion, since it is through faith that men acknowledge God's supreme power and dominion over them. Sacrifice is a necessary condition for a truly Christian life; as disciples of Christ, we must constantly immolate our natural inclinations and desires on the altar of the inward temple of our soul.

But the act of faith is a sacrifice of the highest order, because it implies the immolation of our reason, the best and noblest of our faculties. Children and simple people, it is true, do not consider the act of faith as a sacrifice, because they do not realize and appreciate the value of their mind as do those who use and exercise it more. But the more highly developed and the more enlightened are our mental powers, the greater is our sacrifice when we bend and humble our reason before some revealed truth which it can not grasp. In matters of faith, we can but acknowledge the weakness of our mind, and must rely entirely on the authoritative word of Christ as made known to us through the Gospel and the voice of the Church. Our reason may, at times, rebel and claim its rights; but, by the act of faith, we submit its finite power to the infinite wisdom of God. This indeed is a sacrifice which we cannot make without the assistance of divine grace.

2—*Faith is a reasonable sacrifice.*—Reason was given us by our Creator to guide us in life and direct us to our natural end. Why then should we apparently put out this our natural light, to walk in the light of faith? Because the light of faith is by far brighter than our own, since it enables us to discover things which are entirely beyond the reach of the human mind. Our mind enlightens and guides us concerning the things of this world; but it is through faith alone that we can discover the mysteries of the world to come. When therefore we follow the guidance of faith, far from acting blindly and walking in darkness, we on the contrary surround ourselves with an exceedingly bright light, the only light which can make visible to us, although imperfectly here-below, the wonders that lie beyond the material world. If then faith demands of us a sacrifice, there is no doubt but that our sacrifice is most reasonable.

3—*Faith is a fruitful sacrifice.*—How grateful I must be to God for the priceless gift of faith which has saved me from the darkness of unbelief and spared me the pangs of doubt! Like the bright star which guided the Wise Men to Jesus, faith leads me on to God, my first principle and my last end. After years of arduous labor, the scientist or the philosopher may not be able, by the sole power of his reason, to solve the enigma of life; he may reach the hour of death without knowing whence he has come, why he lived in this world, and whither he is going; while, even from my early boyhood, I knew the true meaning and purpose of life, and could say with perfect assurance: "God created me to know Him, and love Him, and serve Him in this life, and to be happy with Him for ever in the next." The mind of the unbelieving scholar is tormented by unrest and anxiety, while mine is in a state of perfect peace and confidence. Such is the first fruit of faith.

Hope is the daughter of faith. How comforting is the expectation of endless and unalloyed happiness to those who grieve and suffer here-below! How many tears are wiped away by the thought of Christ's sufferings, love, and promises! Did I never hear such words as these fall from the lips of the poor and unfortunate, in the midst of their sorrow and affliction: "If I had not the faith, I would not be able to stand this trial." Did I never see resignation, and even joy, shine in the eyes of the dying enlightened by faith? This is indeed sufficient to prove that if faith is a sacrifice, it is undoubtedly a *fruitful* sacrifice.

## III

If my sight is still dim and weak concerning the things of the next world, when, at my last hour, I hear the divine Master call me, I will cry out to Him, like the blind man of Jericho: "Lord, grant that I may see," and I shall hear Him answer: "Receive thy sight; thy faith hath made thee whole." Then my eyes shall be opened, and I shall see God, not through a veil or in a mirror as I now do, but face to face, as He is, and I shall possess and love Him for ever. Great then shall be the reward of my faith.

Do I value, as I ought, the priceless gift of faith? Have I been sufficiently careful to keep it intact by avoiding whatever might weaken or even ruin it? What zeal do I display in making the light of faith shine before men? Do I often repeat the prayer of the Apostles, in my own behalf, and for the souls entrusted to me: "Lord, increase my faith"?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*
*"Domine, adauge nobis fidem."*

## 29. THE SPIRIT OF FAITH

"JUSTUS EX FIDE VIVIT" *(Heb. x. 38)*

### I

IN ALL His actions Our Lord had no other rule than the will of His Father: "I seek not My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (John v. 30); He had no other end than the glory of God: "I seek not My own glory" (John viii. 50). Whether He retired to the desert to do penance for us, or went up to the mountain to pray, He followed the inspiration of the Holy Spirit dwelling in Him, "*ductus est a Spiritu*"; He was guided in all things by the will of His Father and the promptings of the Holy Ghost.—The Spirit of God dwells in me also, and I must allow myself to be led by Him in all the acts of my Christian and priestly life: "*Quicumque Spiritu Dei aguntur, hi sunt filii Dei*" (Rom. viii. 14). "*Si Spiritu vivimus, Spiritu et ambulemus*" (Gal. v. 25). The guidance of the Holy Spirit is made known to me by the light of faith.

### II

HAVING received the inestimable gift of faith in Holy Baptism, and the great blessing of a Christian and priestly education, I experience no difficulty in believing the revealed truths which the Church teaches. But do I live up to my belief? Is my life deeply influenced and constantly directed by the light of faith? Is faith my only guiding principle and leading motive in all the acts of my sacerdotal ministry?—

Holy Spirit, enlighten my mind that I may fully understand the nature and necessity of the life of faith.

From a moral and supernatural standpoint, we can discover in ourselves three sources of life, the senses, reason, and faith. He who lives by the senses, seeking physical pleasure in all things, lowers himself to the level of the brute, and St. Paul, in strong and expressive terms, rightly calls him "*animalis homo.*" He who lives by reason, is guided by that natural knowledge of right and wrong which the Creator has placed in germ in every human soul. This life is common to all men, whether Christians or pagans.

But, in the disciples of Christ, rational life is raised and perfected by the supernatural or divine light of faith added to the natural or human light of reason. A Christian, and still more a priest, if he be worthy of his name, is guided in his thoughts, desires, and actions, not only by the highest and noblest powers of his nature, but directly by God Himself. Faith leads him to God, as the Star led the Wise Men to Jesus. His life may not apparently differ from that of other men; yet it does in reality; for, transformed by faith, its fruits are no longer human, but divine.

A priest, led by the spirit of faith, applies himself to fulfill the essential duty of prayer faithfully and fervently, because he realizes that he cannot do God's will and work without the constant help of divine grace. He tries to be charitable and meek, because he sees Christ in his neighbor and remembers the precept of the Lord: "Love one another, as I have loved you." He strives to be humble, as a faithful disciple of Him who said: "Learn of Me, because I am humble of heart." In his sufferings, sorrows, failures, and disappointments, he is patient and resigned; for he knows, from the words and example of his Master, that at such a price heaven is bought: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His glory? (Luke xxiv. 25). Finally he views and estimates all things in the light of faith, after the example of that young Saint whose decisions and judgments were determined by his answer to this question: "What is this worth with regard to eternity?—*Quid hoc ad æternitatem.*"

Is it possible that, having been favored by God with the precious gift of faith, I should neglect to use it in the practice of my daily life? Is it conceivable that, having been fitted with mighty wings which can carry me to those higher regions where, in St. Bernard's words, "the air is purer, the sky more open, God Himself nearer," I should choose to crawl in dust and darkness, and breathe the thick and foggy atmosphere of the earth, especially when I know that the spirit of faith can be for me a source of strength in trials and temptations, a source of consolation in suffering and sorrow, a source of merit and holiness in all my actions?

## III

If I am filled with the spirit of faith, I can patiently bear with the greatest trials and resist the most violent temptations. What can discourage me, if I constantly remember that the present life is not meant to be for me a state of rest, pleasure, and peace, but a laborious and painful test, at the end of which "there is laid up for me a crown of justice which the Lord, the just Judge, will render unto me in that day"? (II Tim. iv. 8.)

If I am animated by the spirit of faith, I will not sink under the burden of suffering and grief; "For that which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory" (II Cor. iv. 17). Once I realize that the way of the Cross is the way to eternal happiness, I need but one glance at my Crucifix, or one look towards heaven to feel relieved and comforted, even so far as to find joy in suffering and sorrow.

Finally, the spirit of faith is to me like the philosopher's stone so eagerly sought by the alchemists of old, and which was expected to turn all metals into gold; for it can transform my whole life, raising it from the purely natural to the supernatural order, and turning all the activity of my soul and body into that spiritual gold which alone can purchase heaven for me.

Do I ordinarily act through motives of faith, in my personal life, and in the discharge of my priestly duties?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*
*"In fide vivo Filii Dei"* (Gal. ii. 20).

## 30. Obedience

### "ET ERAT SUBDITUS ILLIS"

### I

"Behold an Angel of the Lord appeared in sleep to Joseph, saying: Arise, and take the Child and His Mother, and fly into Egypt; and be there until I shall tell thee. Who arose, and took the Child and His

Mother, and retired into Egypt. . . . But when Herod was dead, behold an Angel of the Lord appeared in sleep to Joseph in Egypt, saying: Arise, and take the Child and His Mother, and go into the land of Israel. . . . Who arose, and took the Child and His Mother, and came into the land of Israel'' (Matt. ii. 13-22). The very wording of the sacred text seems to have been devised by the Evangelist to bring out the simplicity, promptness, and perfection of Joseph's obedience to the voice of the divine Messenger. Joseph could well have objected the hardships and dangers of such a long journey for the young Mother and her Infant Child, the well grounded fear of a life of poverty and want in a strange land, in the midst of unknown and perhaps unfriendly people. But such considerations did not even enter his mind; without discussing the order received, without hesitation, and trusting in the Lord, he at once set out. He thus showed himself truly worthy of being the guardian of his Lord, ''*custos Domini sui,*'' of Him who, from early childhood, was to bend His power and majesty before this humble workman and his holy Spouse, ''*erat subditus illis,*'' and crown his life on earth with a supreme and sublime act of obedience, ''*factus obediens usque ad mortem.*''

## II

THE law of obedience or subordination is a universal law of nature, binding upon all creatures living or inanimate, rational or irrational. The stone that falls, the bird that flies, the plant that turns its leaves and petals towards the sun, the clouds that follow the capricious currents of the wind, the animals which recognize man's voice and authority, all obey the laws of nature, that is, the will of the Creator concerning every one of His creatures.

Man himself is not exempt from this law; but since he is endowed with reason and free-will, he must obey according to his nature, intelligently and freely. Thus understood obedience can never weaken my personality and lower human dignity in me. It would indeed degrade me, if it were prompted by fear and not by love, if it were the reluctant submission of a prisoner or a slave, not that of a Christian and of a priest. It would truly be unworthy of a man endowed with reason and free-will, if it were really blind as it is sometimes falsely termed, but obedience can be blind only for those whose eyes are not enlightened by faith. With us Christians, who walk in the light of our Master's teaching and example, obedience to our superiors, in so far as they share in God's authority over us, is, in every case, worthy of human reason and dignity, as well as most beneficial to our spiritual welfare. Christian obedience, therefore, never lowers but always uplifts man; it is a badge of honor, a token of victory over ourselves; and in spiritual warfare, still more truly than in physical conflicts, a righteous and victorious warrior is a *noble* man.

Such is the nature of the obedience which, immediately after my ordination to the Holy Priesthood, I willingly pledged to my Bishop and to those who share in his authority over me. That pledge was more than a word of honor; it was a sacred promise made at the foot of the altar, on the most solemn and momentous day of my life. Do I now feel, as deeply as I did then, the importance of this obligation and the consequences of my attitude towards it for myself and for the Church? Hierarchical subordination is the essential element and the soul of any organized society. The Church, it is true, is a divine society and, as such, has received the promise of divine assistance to the end of time; but it is also a human society, composed of men and governed by men, and, as such, its strength lies in the authority of the rulers and the obedience of the subjects. Our opponents know this well and do their utmost to divide us. One of the most prominent among them in our own days said: "You Catholics are saved by the admirable hierarchy of your religious society. Whenever Rome speaks, you obey. As long as you remain thus united, we can do nothing against you."

### III

Do I fully understand my obligations and responsibilities in matters of obedience? What has been, to this day, my attitude towards the laws, decrees, and regulations of the Church, the decisions and orders of my Bishop and other ecclesiastical superiors? Do I obey *willingly* and *promptly,* without looking for excuses or pretexts to do my own will? Do I obey *courageously,* not only in spite of natural reluctance on my part, but also in spite of human respect? What others may think or say if I follow the line of duty, this I should not care to know; but what they ought to think or say, this I know well. Is my obedience *supernatural?* "If I yet pleased men," says St. Paul, "I would not be the servant of Christ." (Gal. i. 10.) Do I therefore try, in obeying, to please God above all? "For there is no power but from God." (Rom. xiii.)

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.* "*Obedite præpositis vestris.*" (Hebr. xiii. 17)

## 31. CHARITY—I. THE LOVE OF GOD

"SIMON BAR JONA, DILIGIS ME PLUS HIS?" *(John xxi. 15.)*

### I

"THOU shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, with thy whole mind . . . This is the greatest and first commandment" (Matt. xxii. 37-38). God's will is that we should love Him without measure; this is why God has given man a heart that loves and craves for love; this is why He sent His divine Son to remind us of this essential duty, to teach us the ways of true love, and give us, in His adorable Person, a concrete and accessible object of love.

*Acts of adoration and love.*

### II

I MUST love God, first because He is in Himself infinitely worthy of love. If beauty and excellence in creatures can move my heart to love, I should remember that they are but a dim reflection of the infinite beauty and perfection of the Creator. If I am attracted by kindness in my fellow-men, how irresistibly should my heart be drawn to Him who is kindness itself! If love calls for love, how spontaneously and sincerely I should love God whose boundless love for me manifests itself at every moment and in every phase of my life on earth! God's love for men is clearly expressed in the very act of man's creation, and still more vividly in the act of Redemption, that second creation of the human soul, that merciful restoration of man's eternal destiny. God's love for me shines forth in every fibre and power of my physical and spiritual nature, and at every instant of my life. Existence, health, talent, faith, Christian education, vocation to the Holy Priesthood, all these treasures have come to me from God's infinite kindness; whatever good I have in me is a gift from His loving Providence. How could I hesitate to return love for love?'' *Nos ergo diligamus Deum, quoniam ipse prior dilexit nos''* (I John iv. 19).

But that we might more easily and strongly be attracted to Him, Almighty God, knowing that we could not raise ourselves up to His infinite height and greatness, condescended to lower Himself to the level of our own human nature, *"Et Verbum caro factum est."* He lived with us, worked, prayed, and suffered with us, taught us the way which leads to heaven, by word and example, cured our spiritual and physical infirmities, consoled the afflicted and sorrowful, and finally laid down His life for our sake: *"Sic nos amantem quis non redamaret?"*

Jesus has done more for me than He has for most men: He has enabled me to know Him more intimately; He has showered upon me special favors and graces during the years of my preparation for the Holy Priesthood; He has made me partaker of His sacerdotal character, power, and mission, thus admitting me among His closest friends on earth, *"Jam non dicam vos servos, vos autem dixi amicos."* Ought I not then to feel towards Him as did the great Apostle of the Gentiles, and be able to say with him: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? or distress? or danger? or persecution? or the sword? . . . But in all these things we overcome because of Him that hath loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, . . . nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. viii. 35-39.)

### III

MY LOVE for God and His divine Son should often be expressed from the depth of my heart, in my intimate relations with Jesus and His heavenly Father at the time of prayer, before the Tabernacle, and especially during the precious minutes of my thanksgiving after Mass; it should often express itself in the form of short invocations or ejaculations, in the midst of my daily duties. These will foster and increase love in my heart, while bringing me joy, courage, and consolation.

But true love mainfests itself, above all, by good works: "If you love Me, keep My commandments." Obedience to God's laws, and docility to Christ's teaching, such is for us the first test of love. We are not all required to do extraordinary things, to perform heroic deeds for the love of God; but we must all try *to do all things well* for His sake: care and supernatural intentions in the ordinary actions which make up our daily life, faithful discharge of our priestly duties, this is for us the most practical and best test of our love for God and His divine Son: "Let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth." (John iii. 18.)

Still greater love is expected of those who have been loved more, and whose mission it is to feed the flock of Christ on divine love. I can hear the Master asking me: "Lovest thou Me more than these?" and I must be able to answer in all sincerity, with the Prince of the Apostles: "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee," and thus deserve from Him the same expression of commendation and confidence: "Feed My lambs." Generosity in sacrifice, zeal in labor, a more complete detachment from earthly things, and even, when required, the painful breaking of the most legitimate bonds established by nature, such must be the extent of a priest's love for his divine Master: "He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me." (Matt. x. 37.)

Is it thus that I love God and Christ?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Domine, tu scis quia amo te."*

## 32. CHARITY—II. THE LOVE OF OUR NEIGHBOR

"ACCIPE VESTEM SACERDOTALEM, PER QUAM CARITAS INTELLIGITUR" *(Pontifical)*

### I

God is love, and has manifested His love for us not only by creating us and preserving our life on earth for a few years, but also by giving us His Son as a ransom for our sins, that we might live for ever with Him in the glory and bliss of heaven: *"Sic Deus dilexit mundum ut Filium suum unigenitum daret"* (John iii. 16). I know how the Son of God fulfilled His mission of love in this world, how He sealed it with His Blood, thus giving us the supreme token of love: "Greater love than this no man hath, that he lay down his life for his friends." (John xv. 13.) Created by love and redeemed by love I must share in this divine love, not only towards God Himself and

Christ my Redeemer, but also towards my fellow-men. Lest, on account of the selfish tendencies of my fallen nature, I should fail to realize the importance of this obligation, Our Lord has made it the object of a special commandment: "A new commandment I give unto you; that you should love one another as I have loved you" (John xiii. 34). This must be the distinctive characteristic of His followers: "By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another" (John xiii. 35).

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, love.*

## II

THE Master's words sank deeply into the souls of His Apostles; they fully understood the precept of brotherly love, observed it faithfully, and transmitted it to posterity by word and example. St. Luke, in the Acts, speaks of the wonderful fruits it bore among the early Christians, moulding them into one heart and one soul "*cor unum et anima una*" (Acts iv, 32) and forcing the admiration of the pagans themselves. St. John never tired of repeating the Lord's precept and commenting on it: "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light" (I John ii. 10). "If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God, whom he seeth not?" (I John iv. 20.) St. Paul says that "without charity we are nothing," while "he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law." (Rom. xiii. 8.)

Had we no other motive than the will of Christ and the example of His Apostles for practising brotherly love, we should do all in our power to obey a commandment which, together with the love of God, Our

Lord considers and represents as the greatest of the New Law, and as the foundation of all the other precepts: "On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets." (Matt. xxii. 40.) But we know, moreover, that charity meets one of the greatest needs, and satisfies one of the deepest aspirations of the human heart; when, therefore, we accept from Christ the sweet obligation of loving one another, we are not only disposed to obey His authority, but are compelled to admire His wisdom and acknowledge His kindness.

The love of parents, relatives, and friends is natural to man's heart. Our Lord wants us to extend that love, in various degrees, to all men, by the power of our will with the help of divine grace; for we all belong to the same great family, since we all call God "our Father"; we are all journeying together to our eternal home, sharing in the same blessings as also in the same trials; moreover, we Christians are the disciples of the same kind and loving Master. Finally, we priests cannot forget the words we heard when receiving the chasuble, on the day of our ordination: "Receive the priestly vestment by which charity is signified." Charity is the great sacerdotal virtue, since priests are ordained especially that they may devote their lives to the spiritual welfare of their fellow-men, and labor incessantly to unite them all in the love of Christ, "*ut sint consummati in unum.*" As a disciple of Him who gave his life for the salvation of all, a priest must love all men; as sharing in Christ's priestly character, power, and mission, he must love particularly his brethren in the Priesthood and the souls entrusted to his care.

## III

To WHAT extent am I bound by the precept of brotherly love? "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"; this is God's answer.

I wish myself no harm: I must therefore do my neighbor no harm. I must respect not only his body and temporal property, but also his reputation, his feelings, and above all his soul. I must not, by word or example, make myself responsible for his sins, and perhaps for his eternal damnation.

I desire all manner of good for myself: I must therefore do my neighbor all the good I can, according to circumstances. I must be obliging to others, share in their joy, sympathize with them in their sorrows, encourage and advise them in their troubles and difficulties; in short, I must be kind to them; thus shall I fulfill the precept of the Lord, for "charity is kind," says St. Paul. Then the Apostle adds: "charity is patient"; we all have our defects and shortcomings, and we expect others to bear with them: how can we reasonably refuse to bear with theirs?

As a priest I must go still further in the practice of charity: I must love my neighbor even more than myself, thus following in the footsteps of my divine Master. I must be ready to sacrifice my personal satisfaction, comfort, and temporal interest, even my life itself, for the spiritual good of those entrusted to me; I must be willing to say with St. Paul: "I most gladly will spend and be spent myself for your souls; although loving you more, I be loved less." (II Cor. xii. 15). "He that has true and perfect charity seeketh himself in nothing," says the Author of the *Imitation of Christ*, (i-xv. 3).

To what extent, and in what manner do I practise fraternal charity towards all those with whom I have to deal, especially towards my brethren in the priesthood and those to whose salvation I must devote my life? On what particular occasions, and for what particular reasons, do I more usually fail in the practice of charity?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Plenitudo legis est dilectio."* (Rom. xiii. 10.)

## 33. HUMILITY

"DISCITE A ME, QUIA MITIS SUM ET HUMILIS CORDE"

### I

"IN WHAT day soever you shall eat thereof, you shall be as Gods." (Gen. iii. 5.) Thus spoke the tempter to the mother of the human race. Through pride Satan had lost his high station in God's kingdom, and jealousy induced him to ruin man through pride. To raise us from our fallen state and restore us to our original dignity, God, in His love and mercy, deigned to make Himself like unto man, that His self-abasement might undo the evil done by man's pride: *"Cum in forma Dei esset, exinanivit semetipsum, formam servi accipiens."* (Phil. ii. 7.) Born in a manger Christ lived, for thirty years, a humble and hidden life, doing the work of a poor artisan, eating the bread and wearing the garments of the common people. During His public life, He often condemned pride in the strongest terms, preached the necessity and reward of humility, and so perfectly exemplified that virtue in His person as to be able to say: "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart." Finally, He accepted for our sake the humiliations of His Passion and the ignominious death of the cross. Thus did our Blessed Lord prepare the glory of His Resurrection and of His triumphant Ascension, and merit for us the right to partake of His glory in heaven: "Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke xiv. 11.)

*Acts of adoration, praise, love.*

## II

THE flame of pride burns in every human mind, and dies only with man himself. Together with sensuality, it is the root of all spiritual and of many temporal evils. To such a dangerous and constant enemy of our souls we can oppose but one efficient weapon, *humility.*

Humility is a virtue which prompts man to form a *true* estimate of himself, readily acknowledge his faults and defects, and refer to God, with sincere gratitude, all the qualities and advantages bestowed upon him. True humility does not imply self-depreciation as practised by the saints, who could sincerely believe in their hearts what they expressed by words; for, with the great majority of men, self-depreciation is nothing but false humility or disguised pride. To be humble we must simply and honestly desire to be judged and estimated according to our true worth, not however as we fancy it, but as God knows it: humility is *truth.*

Moreover, humility is *justice.* Why should we think ourselves better than our fellowmen? We may notice their defects and limitations; but do we know their qualities and merits as well? Our own heart is, at times, a mystery to us: how then can we believe that we clearly read the souls of others? God alone knows men perfectly and can rightly compare one with another. The humble man is not only just but also merciful to his neighbor; for, realizing that he himself needs God's mercy and forgiveness, he avoids the disdainful tone, the haughty attitude, which so deeply wound the heart of the guilty or of the unfortunate.

Thus humility fosters peace, charity, and order among individuals and in society at large, and its ultimate reward is eternal glory. Surely this is sufficient to awaken in me an appreciation and love for this beautiful virtue unknown to the pagan world, and in its essence truly Christian.

Can I consider myself exempted from the practice of humility, because I have been more highly favored by God, and because I receive greater honor and reverence from men? Am I to use my priesthood as a pedestal for ambition and vain glory? My light must shine before men, it is true, but only in so far as it is a faithful reflection of Christ's light, "*lumen de lumine,*" and promotes God's glory, not my own: "*Luceat lux vestra coram hominibus, ut videant opera vestra bona, et glorificent Patrem vestrum qui in cœlis est*" (Matt. v. 16). Our Blessed Savior did not seek His own glory, and yet He was clearly entitled to it: "*Non quæro gloriam meam . . . Gloria mea nihil est*" (John viii. 50-54). "The servant is not greater than his lord: neither is the apostle greater than he that sent him." (John xiii. 16.) I know how Jesus censured the ambition of His Apostles, when there was a strife among them as to which of them should seem the greater: "He that is the greater among you, [He said] let him become as the younger: and he that is the leader as he that serveth." (Luke xii. 26.) The special graces and favors which Christ has granted me, far from giving me a right to seek human glory, only increase my responsibility in the eyes of God, and it is with sincere humility that I must apply to myself the words of the Centurion: "*Domine, non sum dignus.*"

### III

Do I often pray for the spirit of humility, realizing that it cannot grow and thrive in my soul without the constant help of divine grace?—Do I frequently humble myself before God, sincerely acknowledging my sins and evil inclinations?—Do I refer to Him all the good that is in me, and particularly the honor and consideration which come to me from my priestly dignity and the exercise of my priestly office?—Do I earnestly try to know myself such as I am in the eyes of God? Do I ever desire to be considered better than I am in reality?—Far from underrating the talent, character, or merits of others, in order to exalt myself above them, do I cultivate the habit of thinking and speaking well of my neighbor?—Do I accept humiliations and confusions with a truly Christian spirit, in atonement for my sins of pride, and in union with Our Lord despised and insulted by men?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Qui se humiliat exaltabitur*" (Luke xiv. 11).

## 34. CHASTITY—I. OBLIGATION

"CASTITATEM, DEO ADJUVANTE, SERVARE OPORTEBIT."

*(Pontifical)*

### I

"*Tota pulchra es, Maria, et macula originalis non est in te.*" Not only did Mary, the blessed Mother of the immaculate Lamb of God, come into this world without the stain of original sin, not only did her soul, ever after, remain pure from the least blemish, but she was not even disturbed by those inward struggles of the flesh and the spirit, which all other human beings constantly experience, and which so tormented and grieved St. Paul himself, that in the midst of his anguish he exclaimed: "Who will deliver me from this body of death?" Mary's soul was like a cloudless sky, like the calm and smooth surface of a crystal lake, like a bright and shadeless light. In her the human race recovered its original innocence and beauty; truly therefore is Mary called "the glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel, and the honor of her people." The wonderful privilege of the Immaculate Conception was granted to her alone, because it was in her womb that Christ was to dwell, and from her veins that He was to draw His redeeming blood. But, since I share in Mary's intimate relations with the adorable Person of our Blessed Savior, the Church sets her perfect purity before me as the ideal towards which I must strive to raise myself, through my own efforts supported by God's grace, and she imposes upon me the obligation of sacerdotal chastity: *"Castitatem, Deo adjuvante, servare oportebit."*—Praise of Mary: *"Ave Maria, gratia plena, . . . benedicta tu in mulieribus."*

## II

THE words spoken to me, on the day of my ordination to the Subdeaconship, did not only convey a counsel or an exhortation, but bound me by the strictest obligation until the hour of my death. When Gregory VII sat on Peter's throne, and cast a searching glance over the confines of his spiritual kingdom, a sad and disheartening sight everywhere met his eyes: corruption had invaded the sanctuary, and many prevaricators could be found in all the ranks of the Clergy. Some of the most eminent dignitaries of the Church urged him to repeal a law which human weakness was apparently no longer able to observe. But the holy Pontiff, after much praying and fasting, seeing in God's light, from the summit where he dwelt, that without chastity there could be in the priest no true ideal of holiness, no entire and unselfish devotion to his flock, no real claim to the confidence and respect of his people, then uttered the famous words which have since been repeated by his successors in individual cases of unfaithfulness: "*Sit castus aut pereat.*" Sacerdotal chastity has therefore been for many centuries, and has remained to this day an unquestionable duty of the Catholic priest: "*Castitatem servare oportebit.*"

It is also a beautiful and precious privilege which raises us above our human nature, making us equal and even, in a certain sense, superior to angels. For an angel is without a body; he has not to struggle against the flesh to live the life of a spirit; while, in matters of chastity, a priest's soul must live in a body as if she were a pure spirit; she must live her own spiritual life, using the body as a mere instrument, and imparting to it a virtue which is not of the flesh. Chastity raises us still higher, close to the Blessed Mother of Christ, the "*speculum sine macula,*" close to the all pure human nature of Jesus, and close to God himself, making us resemble our Creator more truly in proportion as it spiritualizes us more perfectly. Thus are explained the words of the prophet: "*O quam pulchra est casta generatio cum claritate!*"

Yet the beauty of chastity is not, in itself, the reason why the Church requires that virtue of her ministers. The most obvious and strongest motive to account for the existence of this law is clearly stated in the *Following of Christ:* "O how clean ought those hands to be, how pure that mouth, how holy that body, how unspotted the heart of a priest, into whom the Author of purity so often enters"! (iv-xi, 6). If the priests of the Old Law could not enter the Temple to offer sacrifices, before they had performed the rite of external purification, by far greater is the obligation of purity laid upon the priests of the New Law, who offer not mere symbols, but the true Victim, Jesus Christ the Son of God. A priest must be pure like Mary, because, like Mary, he also gives birth to Christ on the altar, holds Him in his hands, receives Him in his heart, and lives with Him near the Tabernacle.

As a priest I do not only give Our Lord his Eucharistic life on the altar; I must also give life to the souls redeemed by Christ, by making Him live in them, and this especially through the ministry of the Confessional. When I handle a lily, or a corporal, or a purificator, unless my hands are clean, I soil the whiteness of those spotless objects. In like manner, unless my own soul is pure, how can I handle without staining them the holy souls which God sends me in the Tribunal of Penance? How can I contribute to preserve and increase their beauty?

More frequently, it is true, I have to deal with the souls of sinners. Here again, to purify sinful hearts I must be chaste. I must have chaste eyes to probe the depth and state of their wounds, chaste hands to cleanse and dress their sores, lest in trying to purify others I myself should be soiled. For it is the exclusive privilege of chastity to touch without danger the most unclean souls, to talk with the Samaritan woman, to absolve the adulteress, or to say *"non licet"* to the rich as well as to the poor. It is the privilege of chastity to go, without falling, through the seductions of the world, through the violent temptations which may assail a priest in the very discharge of his sacred office. Finally, it is the privilege of chastity to maintain and explain the prestige of the Catholic Priesthood, even in the eyes of heretics and unbelievers.

Therefore, the idea of the priesthood implies the idea of chastity. Catholics understand this well, and, whatever their own weaknesses may be, they want chaste priests. Impurity is perhaps the only sin which they will never forgive in a priest; for it is, in their eyes, an inexcusable crime and an eternal disgrace.

Do I love and prize the beautiful virtue of chastity as much as I ought? To deepen in my soul the sense of my obligations in this regard, do I like to remember these words spoken to me on the day of my ordination to the Subdeaconship: *"Castitatem servare oportebit"?*

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.* *"O quam pulchra est casta generatio cum claritate!"*

## 35. CHASTITY—II. MEANS OF PRESERVING IT

### "BEATI MUNDO CORDE"

### I

THE enemies of our Blessed Savior, during His life on earth, never missed an opportunity to calumniate Him and censure His conduct; but so evident to all was the perfect purity of His soul that no one ever dared to accuse Him in this regard; and when Our

Lord challenged the Pharisees, saying: *"Quis ex vobis arguet me de peccato?"* they held their peace. Jesus proclaimed the necessity of purity, without which no one can be admitted into God's presence: *"Beati mundo corde, quoniam ipsi Deum videbunt."* His Blessed Mother was conceived and ever remained in the state of perfect innocence, and his Foster-Father is rightly called the chaste Spouse of Mary. We know that Our Lord showed special affection to St. John the Apostle, on account of his chastity, and, since then, He has never failed to bestow special blessings upon chaste souls.

O Jesus, teach me the ways of priestly chastity, that I also may prove worthy of being numbered among Thy most intimate friends: *"Jesu, amator castitatis, miserere nobis."*

## II

IN MATTERS of chastity there can be no middle way for a priest: he must aim at being perfectly chaste, or he shall soon cease to be chaste at all. A semi-virtue often leads to sin through illusion, weakness, pride, and presumption; from a first fall to a relapse there is but one step, and it is easily taken. The habit of sin is soon contracted, sacrilege follows almost infallibly, faith is gradually weakened and perhaps completely ruined by sacrilege; there is a general depression and sinking of the poor sacerdotal soul which is thus, unwillingly or unconsciously, dragged to the abyss of final impenitence.

If I cannot fail to understand my duty in regard to chastity, I must also be aware of the difficulties I have to overcome, and of the dangers I must avoid, in order to fulfill it completely. I know that the fire of concupiscence has not been extinguished in me by the grace of ordination, and consequently that I must watch and pray; for, if the spirit is willing, yet the flesh is weak. My present dispositions may be excellent; my past life may have been free from serious falls, or I may have atoned for past sins by a sincere repentance and a courageous penance. But, in matters of chastity, this is not a sufficient guarantee, and I cannot rely only on the strength of my will; for there have been pious and virtuous souls who were suddenly ruined by self-confidence and lack of prudence. I must therefore carefully avoid whatever might endanger virtue in me: as, for instance, certain visits and conversations, undue familiarity in my relations, indiscreet curiosity. The real strength of a priest and of any man, in the moral order, consists especially in avoiding the occasions of sin; it is mostly by inducing us to keep away from danger that the grace of God saves us from sin, and this is precisely what we ask at the end of the Lord's prayer, "*et ne nos inducas in tentationem.*" The "*Vigilate*" of the Gospel must therefore be my motto.

But, that I may be able to watch unceasingly and to overcome temptation, when it assails me in spite of my vigilance, I must also pray, "*et orate.*" The Church knows well that I need the help of prayer; this is why she gave me her official Prayer Book, the Breviary, when she imposed upon me the obligation of chastity: "Castitatem, *Deo adjuvante,* servare oportebit." To praise God worthily and pray to Him in the name of the Church, I must be chaste, and to be chaste I must pray. A sincere and deep devotion to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, to Our Lord's Passion, and to the Blessed Virgin, this is for me, as for all Christians, a most efficient protection against the temptations of the flesh.

To vigilance and prayer I must add the practice of *mortification*. Mortification of the mind, the heart, and the senses, is an essential condition of virtue.

The *mind* is the light and guide of the will; if I keep my mind away from bad or dangerous objects, I shall thereby keep my will free from evil influences. There are more interesting, beautiful, and uplifting writings, in the realm of literature, history, science, and art, than I can possibly read in a lifetime: by using only those that are best in every respect, I can both promote the culture of my mind and preserve the purity of my soul.

Mortification of the *heart* is still more necessary. When I consecrated myself to God, I offered myself without any restriction; but if there is anything in me which Our Lord wants to possess, it is above all my heart. A priest's heart is an inviolable sanctuary in which Christ alone must dwell as the Master. If I allow creatures to occupy it, I deprive Our Lord of His most cherished treasure in this world, I am unfaithful to Him. This is to many the most trying aspect of the law of chastity; for the human heart, by its very nature, is eager to give and receive affection; among natural enjoyments and pleasures, love is the greatest, the most refined, and consequently it is that for which we most readily absolve ourselves. This does not mean that we are bound to renounce every form of human affection. When Our Lord gave us the great precept of brotherly love, He did not say that we should love one another with a purely spiritual love, as angels do in heaven, but like men, with our human hearts which are both spirit and flesh, provided the flesh is controlled by the spirit, that is, as He Himself did, "*sicut dilexi vos.*" For if Jesus loved us as God, He also loved us as a man. We know that He wept at the grave of His friend Lazarus, and so tenderly that the Jews said: "*Ecce quomodo amabat eum.*" We know that He had compassionate feelings for the suffering, that He loved little children, that He loved His country. This was not mere spiritual love, but it was not sensual love either; it was the love of a perfectly well regulated human nature, in which the senses served the soul instead of being served by her, in which the soul herself was governed by the divine will and filled with divine love. Such is true human love; it is not this, therefore, that a priest is asked to give up, but those either sensual or soft feelings which weaken the will, trouble the mind, and constitute a real danger to the purity of the soul.

Finally, as it is generally through the senses that temptation steals into the soul, we cannot be chaste unless we mortify our *external senses.* First, the sense of *sight;* for it is mostly through the eyes that sin creeps into the heart; the imagination would not be filled with so many dangerous and troublesome phantasms, if the eyes were kept under control. Then the sense of *taste:* "He who feeds his slave too well will soon make him a rebel," says St. Paul alluding to the body. We must also avoid luxury or undue comfort about our persons and surroundings; virtue needs a certain austerity in life and habits; for chastity is a "*lilium inter spinas,*" a lily the beauty of which has to be protected by the thorns of mortification: "*Si spiritu facta carnis mortificaveritis, vivetis*" (Rom. viii. 13).

Have I made a sufficient use of vigilance, prayer, and mortification, to preserve and strengthen the virtue of chastity in me?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Cor mundum crea in me, Deus."*

## 36. MEEKNESS

### "BEATI MITES"

### I

ST. JOHN the Baptist called Jesus "the Lamb of God," not only because He was to be immolated, but also because the lamb is the symbol of meekness. Crowds followed our Blessed Savior, attracted by the gentle and kindly expression of His countenance as well as by the comforting power of His words. Children approached Him with confidence; He laid His hands on their heads and blessed them. The sick were brought to Him, and He cured them; the sorrowful came to Him, and He consoled them; sinners fell at His feet, and, without a word of rebuke but with a kind exhortation, He forgave them their sins. But it was especially during the bitter hours of His Passion that Jesus showed His meekness in the most admirable manner. The gentle Lamb of God was then surrounded by a herd of wild and cruel wolves who unmercifully tore His flesh and spilled His Blood; yet He did not utter a word of complaint: *"Ego quasi agnus mansuetus."* He bore their blows and insults in silence, and, when He spoke, it was to excuse His tormentors and beseech his Father to forgive them: "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Truly Jesus had a right to say: *"Discite a me, quia mitis sum."*

*Acts of adoration, admiration, love.*

## II

1—*Nature of Christian Meekness*—Meekness should not be identified with weakness, with the tendency to yield to every one, under any circumstances, in order to avoid effort or trouble. There are occasions on which it is our duty to oppose, or contradict, or rebuke others, when the glory of God, the rights of the Church, and the interests of souls are at stake. Did not Our Lord Himself give way to righteous indignation, when He rebuked His Apostles for their lack of faith and their earthly views, when He stigmatized the Pharisees, and drove the money changers out of the Temple? "We must resist evil and restrain the vices of those that are under our charge, constantly and courageously," says St. Francis of Sales. This duty however is perfectly compatible with the practice of meekness.

Meekness does not consist either in mere external gentleness of manners and speech, in a certain passivity or lack of natural sensitiveness under insult and provocation. It must be in the heart; for it is a virtue (virtus), that is, a power, the power to control the irascible impulses of our nature. Those who seem to have calm and gentle dispositions under ordinary circumstances, cannot truly be called meek if, at the least cross word or at the slightest injury, they show displeasure and resentment. There are those who, on the contrary, have inherited an extreme sensitiveness, or a morose and violent temper, but have acquired, through constant efforts and prayers, the power to resist these inordinate inclinations of their nature. They can stand contradiction, insult, injustice, without losing their patience and equanimity; they easily forgive offences; when they have to rebuke their inferiors or admonish their equals, they remember that correction which proceeds from anger and passion is of no avail. These are the truly meek of heart, the faithful imitators of Christ, the Lamb of God. Such was St. Francis of Sales; may I obtain, through his intercession, the grace to understand and appreciate the virtue of meekness which that amiable Saint called the *flower of charity!*

2—*Fruits of Meekness*—If I need encouragement in the practice of Christian meekness, I have only to remember Our Lord's exhortation to His Disciples: "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find *rest* for your souls." Peace of mind is the first sweet fruit of meekness. The soul of a man who easily yields to anger and impatience is like the swelling and turbid waters of a storm-beaten lake; whilst the soul of the meek resembles the smooth and transparent surface of a clear fountain. There is no envy, nor resentment, nor wounded pride, nor bitter remorse in the heart of the meek, but kindly feelings, calm, joy, and contentment. Meekness makes our relations with those around us easy and pleasing; for a mild and gentle character attracts in the same proportion as a sour and ill-tempered man repels: "A kind heart is a fountain of gladness, making everything around him freshen into smiles." (*Washington Irving.*)

For us priests, Christian meekness bears fruits of still greater value; it is a most efficient means to win hearts to Christ and save souls. There are undoubtedly sinners who have been kept away from the Tribunal of Penance, pious and well disposed souls who have been provoked, disheartened, and perhaps alienated from a fervent practice of their religion, by harsh and inconsiderate remarks heard in the confessional or from the pulpit, by the unkindness or ill-temper of a priest. We can often control inanimate or irrational creatures by physical force; but the human heart is won and governed by meekness: "A spirit of fault-finding, a dissatisfied disposition, a constant irritability, a cloudy brow, even little inequalities in the look and the manner, will often more than neutralize all the good that we can do."

3—*Practice of Meekness*—In striving to acquire and practice the virtue of meekness, we cannot follow a safer and more experienced guide than St. Francis of Sales. These are the wise counsels of the holy Doctor.

> "We should not endeavor with violence to restrain our anger; for thus we would stir up in our hearts more trouble than wrath has excited before; but we should mildly, yet seriously, resist the violent impulse of our nature.
>
> "We must calmly have recourse to God, when we find ourselves excited by wrath, in imitation of the apostles when they were tossed by the wind and the storm upon the waters; for He will command our passion to cease, and a great calm shall ensue.
>
> "As soon as we perceive ourselves guilty of an act of anger, we should repair the fault immediately by an act of meekness towards the same person against whom we were angry.
>
> "Finally, when our mind is in a state of tranquillity, we should try to store up meekness, by speaking all our words, and doing all our actions in the mildest manner possible."

Do I follow these rules? On what occasions, and towards whom in particular should I endeavor to practise meekness?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Jesu mitis et humilis corde, fac cor meum secundum cor tuum."*

## 37. REVERENCE

"PLACENTES DEO CUM REVERENTIA" (*Hebr. xii. 28.*)

### I

THE great respect which Jesus, the Son of God, manifested at Nazareth towards the humble woman who was His Mother, and the poor workman divinely appointed His guardian and Foster-Father, must have filled the angels with admiration. When reading the story of Our Lord's public life, we can notice, in His talks, prayers, and actions, His reverence for His heavenly Father, for the House of God which, on one occasion, He freed from profanation, for the word and commandments of God recorded in the sacred Writings; we can witness His simple but always respectful attitude towards His Apostles and all those who approached Him. If the Son of God felt bound to practise the virtue of reverence towards His creatures, how could I consider myself free from the same obligation towards God Himself and towards those whom He honors?

*Acts of adoration, praise, love.*

### II

ONE of the most distinguished statesmen of the XIXth century, a Protestant, said that the Catholic Church was the greatest school of respect in the world. It is for all Catholics, and especially for us priests, to show by example as well as by teaching that the Catholic Church deserves such a high tribute of praise. Respect for authority either divine or human, reverence for superiors, secular or ecclesiastical, honor for office, for virtue or character, seems to be waning in our modern world. Should not priests endeavor to foster or revive the spirit of reverence in the souls entrusted to their care? But we cannot expect to fulfill that duty successfully, unless we are filled with that same spirit and allow ourselves to be guided by it in our relations with God, with persons and things consecrated to His service, and with all those who have a right to our respect.

1—*Reverence for God*—Is it necessary for me to be reminded that God, my Creator and Preserver, my Lord and Redeemer, expects from me all the reverence and honor which I can possibly give Him? I know that He positively demands that respect to which He is so evidently entitled. "Thou shalt not take the name of thy Lord in vain" (Exod. xx. 7). "Profane not My holy name" (Lev. xxii. 32). "Let not the naming of God be usual in thy mouth" (Eccles. xxvii. 10). Thus does God bind us to respect His holy name.

We must also respect God's presence. God is everywhere; but He has chosen certain places in this world where He makes us feel His presence more impressively, and where His divine Son now dwells with us, as really as He did with His Apostles during His life on earth. *"Terribilis est locus iste! hic domus Dei est et porta cœli"* (Gen. xxviii. 17). Shall we Christians show less respect in the temple of the true God than the pagans do in the presence of their idols? Can we priests expect from our people a reverential attitude at church, if we ourselves enter and walk through the House of God in a thoughtless and careless manner, if we talk aloud there or carry on conversations without necessity, if, after making a diminutive and meaningless sign of the cross, we genuflect with haste, and rush to the confessional or to the sacristy without duly acknowledging the presence of Our Lord in the Tabernacle by at least a few seconds of recollection and adoration before the altar? Our respectful and devout attitude will do more than our words to impress upon the minds of the faithful the great and consoling truth of the real presence of our Blessed Savior in the Holy Eucharist.

2—*Reverence for Persons and Things Consecrated to God.*—My reverence for God would remain incomplete if I did not treat with due regard the persons and objects consecrated to His service. My fellow-priests are, above all others, entitled to receive from me the same marks of respect which I expect for myself; for they are, as I am, Christ's representatives on earth, and, on account of their sacred character and office, they have been rightly called "other Christs"; lack of respect towards them would therefore be want of reverence to Christ Himself. St. Francis of Assisi said that if he were to meet, at the same time, an angel and a priest, he would bow to the priest first, thus to acknowledge the eminent dignity of the priesthood.

Religious also have a claim to reverence on my part; for they have freely offered themselves to the Lord, and devoted their lives to His service. They are members of Christ's family, they live in intimate relations with Him, and they try to resemble Him more closely by the practice of the evangelical counsels.

We read in the second Book of Kings that Oza was struck dead, because he had laid his hand on the Ark which the priests and levites alone were allowed to touch. The sacred vessels and linen used for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass are still more worthy of respect than the Ark of the Jewish People, since they come in direct contact with the adorable Person of our Blessed Savior. I must therefore handle them and care for them with reverential dispositions.

3—*Reverence towards all.*—Finally, all men, in spite of their faults and defects, have a right to respect in various degrees; for they are the children of God, our common Father, they have been redeemed by the life and death of His beloved Son, and are destined to live with Him in the courts of heaven. But those entrusted to my care have a still greater claim to respect on my part; they call me "Reverend Father" (*reverendus*, i.e. worthy of reverence); I must deserve this title, not only on account of my priestly character and sacred functions, but also by a considerate attitude towards them; as undue familiarity breeds contempt, so will respect for others win respect for my person.

Am I truly reverent towards God, towards Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and the objects used in divine worship? Do I show sufficient respect and consideration to my brethren in the priesthood, to religious, parishioners, and people with whom I deal?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Placentes Deo cum reverentia*" (Hebr. xii. 28).

## 38. PATIENCE

"CARITAS PATIENS EST" (*I Cor. xiii. 4*)

### I

WE FIND in the Gospel many admirable instances of Our Lord's patience towards both friends and enemies, during the three years of His public life; but it is especially at the time of His Passion that Christ manifested the superhuman character of this virtue in His Person. Judas betrayed Him; yet Our Lord called him His friend. All His Apostles abandoned Him, Peter denied Him; yet He did not utter a word of complaint against them. He was falsely accused, and remained silent; He was cruelly tormented, and did not use His divine power to ward off suffering. He was basely insulted and derided; yet He abstained from silencing the insulters and shaming the scoffers. His bruised and torn shoulders were loaded with a heavy burden, on his painful journey to Calvary, He was nailed to the dreadful cross, and He showed Himself patient unto death.

*Acts of adoration, love.*

## II

PATIENCE, as taught by Our Lord's example, is the power of suffering without complaint, for a supernatural end, any sort of physical pain or moral trial either permitted by God for our spiritual progress, or caused by our fellowmen, or springing from our own nature.

We practise patience when we accept with resignation the sufferings and sorrows which sooner or later are the lot of us all; when we bear, with a calm mind and spirit of faith, injustice, or insults, or contempt, or opposition, or indifference, or unkindness; when we do not allow ourselves to be disturbed and discouraged by temptations, by our own defects and weaknesses; when, in the midst of trials and difficulties, we can sincerely say to our Heavenly Father, as His divine Son did: "Thy will be done!" It is not occasionally, but every day, that we are called upon to give our Blessed Savior this testimony of submission and love.

If I need the incentive and encouragement of special motives to bear patiently the physical and moral pains which I encounter in my daily life, I should first remember that, as I exist only through God and for God, He alone knows under what circumstances I can best reach the end He has appointed for me; I should therefore willingly accept them, whether they be pleasurable or painful.

I should also realize that my sins are, in a large measure, responsible for my trials. Shall I then consider suffering a just penalty for my offences? I may; for I am well aware that I deserve punishment for disobeying the commands of the divine Will; but, as a sinner, I should rather deem suffering a *privilege*. Should I not indeed account this a privilege that, having a debt to pay to God's justice, I am offered the most advantageous terms; in this sense, that being bound to atone for my sins I am granted, through Christ's mercy and merits, many opportunities to do so in the brief space of my mortal life, rather than in the mysterious and much dreaded expiation of Purgatory, or perhaps in an eternal life of suffering and sorrow?

But it is especially in the light of the Cross that we can more clearly understand the purpose of what is often termed the mystery of suffering. We call ourselves Christians, that is, the disciples of Christ crucified: are we not therefore bound to follow our divine Master, even on His way to Calvary, when we know that He said: "Whosoever does not carry his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple"? The

Apostles and many of their followers suffered persecution and died a violent death; after them, millions of generous souls have understood and willingly accepted Christ's teaching in regard to suffering. St. Vincent de Paul says that a person who has but little to suffer is very unfortunate; St. Francis of Assisi, whenever he was momentarily free from pain and sorrow, feared lest God should have forsaken him; St. Teresa's favorite motto was: "*Aut pati, aut mori.*" I may not be able to reach the heights where those holy souls dwelt; yet, as far as my weakness allows and God commands, I must try to imitate their patience and generosity.

Every day of my life, I shall have something to suffer: bodily pain or discomfort, hardships and difficulties in fulfilling my priestly duties, unpleasant feelings and impressions in my relations with those around me, temptations, sorrows, and troubles of many sorts. I must consider all those trials as many opportunities to purify my soul, show my love for God, and share in the Passion of Christ; I must look upon them as rough and sharp rocks upon which I may stumble and bleed, but which however I can convert into pure gold, through a courageous and truly Christian resignation, and thus become able to buy for myself, and for others also, an eternity of happiness and glory: "*In cruce vita, in cruce salus.*"

What are my present dispositions in regard to sufferings and trials? In what spirit do I bear them? What spiritual profit do I derive from them for my own sanctification and for the souls entrusted to me?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Jesu patientissime, miserere nobis.*"

## 39. MORTIFICATION

### "SI SPIRITU FACTA CARNIS MORTIFICAVERITIS, VIVETIS"

### I

OUR Lord lived with us, in this world, to teach us what use we should make of ourselves and of earthly things, for the glory of God and the salvation of our souls; He never sought His own satisfaction, "*Christus non sibi placuit*" (Rom. xv. 3), but always kept in mind the will of His Father and the spiritual interests of men. His birth in a manger, His life among the poor, His penance in the desert, His labor by day and prayer by night, the rebuffs and insults to which He willingly submitted for our sake, the humiliations and torments of His passion and death, clearly show that His life was an uninterrupted act of penance and mortification which reached its climax in the Pretorium and on Calvary: "*Tota vita Christi crux fuit et martyrium.*"

After His death, His love for us borrowed the souls and bodies of His Saints throughout ages, to perpetuate through them His life of self-immolation. How can I be a true disciple of Christ, unless I follow Him on the rugged path of mortification, as He invites me: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me"; unless I am one of those of whom St. Paul says: "Always bearing about in our body the mortification of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodies." (II Cor. iv. 10).

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, love.*

### II

AS A Christian, I am bound to live, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit of Christ which was infused into my soul by the grace of Baptism, that it might be the principle guiding all my actions. The obligations of Christian life are so far above the inclinations of the senses and the level of human nature lowered by sin, that I cannot fulfill them without constantly struggling against my evil tendencies. This is the reason why St. Paul declares that those who belong to Jesus Christ have crucified their flesh with their vices and passions: *"Qui Christi sunt carnem suam crucifixerunt cum vitiis et concupiscentiis"* (Gal. v. 24).

As a sinner also, I am obliged to practise mortification, in order to atone for my past sins and avoid sin in the future. Divine justice requires that reparation for sin should proceed from the very same source from which sin itself has come; as our members have served iniquity, so also must they serve justice: "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you shall die. But if by the spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live" (Rom. viii. 12-13). By frequently repressing nature we can weaken its evil tendencies, strengthen the power of the spirit, and thereby establish and confirm its dominion over the body: *"Si spiritu facta carnis mortificaveritis, vivetis."*

As a priest, I need but remember the exhortation I heard, on the day of my ordination to the Holy Priesthood, to understand how strictly bound I am to practise penance and mortification: "Let your conduct be in conformity with the action you perform, so that celebrating the mystery of the Lord's death, you take heed to mortify your members from all vices and lusts." On the altar, as on the Cross, Jesus is both priest and victim, "*Sacerdos et Victima;*" so must I be, since I act in His name when offering the Holy Sacrifice. How can I offer His Blood, and be sparing of my own? Christ wants to continue His Sacrifice through me; I must therefore generously lend Him my soul and my body, that through them He may satisfy His desire for suffering and expiation. Moreover, I know well that, without mortification, I cannot attain to the degree of virtue required of a priest and work efficiently for the salvation of souls.

It is true that we are all naturally inclined to shun whatever implies effort, hardship, and suffering; but experience shows that generous hearts soon find peace and joy in the practice of mortification, "*Pax Dei quae exsuperat omnem sensum*" (Philip. iv. 7), together with increased facility and rapid progress in the practice of all virtues, and the comforting hope of an eternal reward. If the root of the tree is bitter, its fruits are sweet.

### III

MANY are the opportunities for mortification which I can find, every day, in resisting the inclinations of nature either sinful in themselves or leading to sin, in fulfilling my priestly duties, in dealing with others, in denying myself even certain lawful pleasures and satisfactions.

Am I sufficiently watchful to recognize those opportunities, and generous enough to seize them and profit by them?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Qui Christi sunt, carnem suam crucifixerunt cum vitiis et concupiscentiis*" (Gal. v. 24).

## 40. SPIRIT OF POVERTY

"BEATI PAUPERES SPIRITU" *(Matt. v. 3)*

### I

THE Son of God, the Creator and Lord of all things, chose to be born in poverty, of a Mother rich in grace and virtue, but scantily provided with the goods of this world. During the longer part of His life, Jesus earned His daily bread under the guidance of His Foster-Father, in a humble and toilsome trade. I cannot fail to understand the lesson which He taught us both by His example at Nazareth, and by His words on the Mount where He proclaimed the blessedness of the poor in spirit: *"Beati pauperes spiritu, quoniam ipsorum est regnum cœlorum."*

*Acts of adoration, praise, love.*

### II

WHILE pointing out the dangers of wealth and threatening the unworthy rich, Our Lord did not mean to say that the wealthy could have no share in His kingdom. Lazarus and his sisters, whom He frequently visited, seem to have been well provided with earthly possessions; yet our Blessed Savior numbered them among His best friends. What He censured and condemned was not wealth itself, but unjust means or questionable methods in acquiring it, an inordinate longing of the human heart for the goods of this world, and such slavish attachment to them as makes man forget his eternal destiny and refuse, in practice, to heed St. Paul's words: *"Non habemus hic manentem civitatem, sed futuram inquirimus"* (Hebr. xiii. 14).

However, if Our Lord at times associated with the rich, He usually lived among the poor, and it was to them, first of all, that He taught His heavenly doctrine, directing their minds from their earthly sufferings and misery to the joy and bliss of their eternal Home: "*Misit me evangelizare pauperibus*" (Luke iv. 18). His Apostles were poor, the crowds that flocked around Him were mostly of the lowly and hard working class, and to those especially did He send His Disciples to preach the Kingdom of God, during His life and after His death: "*Pauperes evangelizantur*" (Luke vii. 22). We cannot therefore entertain any doubt concerning Jesus' special love of the poor. Although He did not impose complete detachment from earthly goods upon us as a precept, millions of men and women have since clearly understood His preference and generously complied with His counsel, leaving their temporal possessions to devote themselves to God's service in holy poverty.

We live, it is true, in a very different age, and under new social conditions which have brought men greater wealth and comfort than was ever known and enjoyed before. Even the ministers of a Master born on the straw of a manger have to follow the current of material progress and prosperity; but they should not be carried adrift by its power or swallowed up by its treacherous waters. Few priests among us feel called to emulate the heroic poverty of St. Francis of Assisi or of the holy Curé of Ars; yet "there are few things in which a priest is more commonly expected to be faithful to the teaching of Our Lord than in detachment from worldly possessions" (*Hogan, "Daily Thoughts"*). The faithful like to see their priests provided with what they need to live in conformity with their dignity and social standing; but they would be shocked and scandalized if they saw them live in luxury or superfluous comfort; for they feel and understand that this is not in keeping with the spirit of their vocation and the teaching of our divine Master. "The priest known to have a hold on his money has little hold on the hearts of his people" (*Hogan*).

## III

When, therefore, a priest has to labor under temporal difficulties and hardships, let him find encouragement, consolation, and even joy in the thought that he thus bears a closer resemblance with Christ and His Apostles; let him accept his condition without complaint, in the spirit of the Gospel which he preaches.

When a priest has no more than is required for a decent maintenance, let him consider his moderate circumstances a safeguard from many temptations, and an incentive to serve God with a free heart; let him check inordinate desires to acquire more than he possesses, and remember St. Paul's exhortation: "*Habentes alimenta et quibus tegamur, his contenti simus.*" (I Tim. vi. 8.)

If a priest is well provided with the goods of this world, let him bear in mind that the "*Beati pauperes spiritu*" applies equally to all the ministers of Christ, in all ages and countries. Let him consider himself as one of God's treasurers, and know that he shall have to give an account of what has been entrusted to him by divine Providence. Not only should he not entertain any strong attachment to what he now possesses and shall soon have to leave, but he should also be willing to spend at least a part of his surplus for the relief of the poor, and on good works intended to promote God's glory and the salvation of souls. He should not spend more on himself than his condition requires and the spirit of poverty allows. He should think of how he can best dispose of what he has, before departing from this world. "He is poor in spirit who has no riches in his spirit, nor his spirit in riches," says St. Francis of Sales.

Do I understand and appreciate the spirit of poverty? What are my present dispositions in this regard? Do I feel any longing or attachment for worldly possessions? What use do I make of those I have?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Dominus pars hæreditatis meæ."*

## 41. ZEAL

"ELEGI VOS UT EATIS ET FRUCTUM AFFERATIS" *(John xv. 16).*

### I

"I AM come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. But the hireling seeth the wolf coming and leaveth the sheep, and flieth: and the wolf catcheth, and scattereth the sheep: and the hireling flieth, because he is a hireling; and he has no care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know Mine, and Mine know Me . . . And I lay down My life for My sheep. And other sheep I have, that are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John x. 16-17). Christ, the Good Shepherd, is for me the supreme model and the unfailing source of zeal. He knows His sheep, and makes Himself known to them; He watches over them, runs after those that wander from the fold and carries them back on His shoulders; He is solicitous even for those who are not of the fold; He devotes his time and energy to the welfare of His sheep, and finally gives His life for them. May I, from His admirable example, fully understand the duty of priestly zeal, as did the Apostles and many worthy priests after them!

*Acts of adoration, praise, love.*

## II

THE seed of zeal is found in every human heart. We are all inclined by the highest instincts of our nature to share with others the good which is in us, to impart to them the holy thoughts and noble sentiments which are the best fruits of our soul. For we feel that, since we have been created to work out our destiny in society with our fellowmen, we should not live for ourselves alone, but we should help one another. Would we not be ashamed if we had to acknowledge that our life is sterile, that we are useless beings in this world?

Moreover, knowing, as we do, that our stay on earth is to be of short duration, we should be anxious to produce something which may remain after us to prolong our existence and our good influence among men, so that each one of us may be able to say, still more truly than the Latin poet: "I shall not wholly die—*Non omnis moriar*" (Horace, Od. iii. 30). But nothing can more surely make us survive death here below, and live for ever in a better world, than the good which we do one to another.

That zeal, which is in germ in every human soul, must necessarily grow in a truly Christian heart. For if I love God, if I am convinced that He ought to reign over all men, how can I bear to see Him offended by sinners, and insulted by impious men? How can I be resigned to see Him unknown to millions of human beings, and ignored by many who live, act, organize society and rule over nations, as if God did not exist? God depends upon me, as He does upon all His faithful servants, to extend the boundaries of His kingdom on earth and to defend His rights.

In like manner, if I really love Jesus Christ, should I not try to arouse and develop that same love in other hearts? Can I hesitate to work for Him who delivered Himself to sufferings, humiliations, and death for my sake?—If I love Holy Mother Church who has borne me in her womb, reared me in her home, and made me partaker of her rich inheritance of faith and life, should I not try to make her more revered and loved by her own, and bring to her new children who may share with me in her care and bounty?

If I love the souls of men created, as I was, after God's image and likeness, and destined, as I am, to a life of eternal happiness and glory, should I not endeavor to save them from the abyss of eternal damnation? All those loves, born together from a deep and living faith, cannot fail to kindle the flame of zeal in a truly Christian soul: "He who has no zeal, has no love—*Qui non zelat, non amat*" (St. Augustine).

But how much warmer and brighter still should the fire of zeal burn in the hearts of those to whom Our Lord said in the persons of the first Apostles: "Go ye into the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature'' (Mark xvi. 15). Could the Church of Christ have been established on earth without the zeal of the Apostles? Would not millions of now converted pagans still lie in the darkness of idolatry, without the zeal of our heroic missionaries? Could the light of faith have been kept shining through so many tempests, could the young be instructed in the truths of our holy religion and preserved from evil, could so many souls be kept pure and upright, so many sinners converted, so many heretics enlightened and brought back to the true fold, without the zeal of our priests at home? A priest devoid of zeal cannot be a worthy priest; for he has not within his soul the spirit of Christ and of the Apostles; his life is sterile, and he is unfaithful to his mission; for to him as well as to all other priests Our Lord said: ''I have appointed you, that you should go, and should *bring forth fruit;* and your fruit should remain'' (John xv. 16). A priest does not belong to himself, since, on the day of his ordination, he gave himself to Christ, to work for the salvation of souls. His time, his strength, his talent, the spiritual powers and graces of his priesthood, all those precious gifts must be spent for the benefit of the souls entrusted to his care; if he used them for his own pleasure and glory, for his own selfish purpose, he would rob God and man of their due. ''I am the true vine; and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me, that beareth no fruit, He will take away: and every one that beareth fruit He will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit.'' (John xv. 2.)

## III

Do I practise zeal by means of prayer, example, and action?—Do I pray, every day, for the members of my flock, especially during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the recitation of the Divine Office?—Do I show in my conduct that I am convinced of the power of good example?—With what care do I instruct children in the Sunday School, and adults from the pulpit? What zeal do I display to visit the sick, to bring the faithful to the Sacraments, and to give them every opportunity to make their confession and receive Holy Communion?—What efforts do I make to preserve the faith and virtue of the young, by means of Catholic schools, sodalities, clubs, good literature, etc. . . ?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*
"*Pasce oves meas*" (John xxi. 17).

## 42. RELIGION

"ERUNT SACERDOTES MIHI RELIGIONE PERPETUA" *(Exod. xxix. 9).*

### I

OUR LORD, during His life on earth, fulfilled in our name the important duty of Religion in a manner worthy of God's infinite majesty. "When He cometh into the world, He saith: Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldst not, but a body Thou hast fitted to me. Holocausts for sin did not please Thee. Then said I: Behold I come" (Hebr. x. 5-7). From His birth in a manger to His death on the Cross, Jesus' life was an uninterrupted and perfect act of adoration, thanksgiving, reparation, and supplication, an infinite homage which He now continues to offer in the Holy Eucharist. I thank Thee, O Jesus, for thus fulfilling the duty of Religion in my name; grant that I may better understand the importance of this virtue in a priest's life.

## II

God requires of all men the tribute of Religion; not that He needs our homage, since He finds in Himself alone the source of perfect happiness and glory; but, having endowed us with reason and free-will, and thus enabled us to know Him and serve Him, He wants us to acknowledge His infinite perfection by both internal and external acts. We owe a tribute of adoration to His Sovereign Majesty, a tribute of gratitude to His unbounded kindness, a tribute of reparation to His divine justice, a tribute of prayer and supplication to His supreme dominion over us and over all things; such are the four principal acts of the virtue of Religion.

While all men are bound to unite with Our Lord in the practice of Religion or divine worship, this obligation is imposed upon priests in a very special manner; for a priest is by vocation an official worshipper; he must honor and glorify God, not only in fulfillment of a personal obligation, but also in the name of the Church whose minister he is: "Is it a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath spared you from all the people, and joined you to Himself, that you should serve Him in the service of the tabernacle, and should stand before the congregation of the people, and should minister to Him?" (Numbers xvi. 9).

Many are deterred from the fulfillment of their religious duties by indifference, or by material cares and preoccupations. Who will make up for their negligence or deficiency, if not he who "taken from among men, is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God"? (Hebr. v. 1). Is not this one of the principal reasons why the priest is released from temporal cares and generously maintained by the laity, that he may stand for them before God while they are toiling and struggling for the necessaries and comforts of life, to adore Him and thank Him in their name, to pray to Him for their needs and obtain pardon for their sins?

A priest, therefore, is by vocation a *religious man;* he should never forget his obligations to God, to the Church, and to his people, while performing the great official acts of Religion, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the recitation of the Divine Office, and the administration of the Sacraments. The sentiments of reverence and devotion which then animate his soul and are expressed by his attitude, words, and gestures; the respect and care he shows for his church, his altar, and all the objects used in divine worship; his zeal for the decoration of the sanctuary, for liturgical ceremonies and sacred music; even his manner of genuflecting, of making the sign of the cross, of reading the text of the Missal and Ritual, not only honor God, but also edify the faithful and awaken or foster in them the spirit of Religion. Whether or not God is worthily worshipped by the souls entrusted to my care, depends largely on the way I myself worship Him; for the faithful, as a rule, model their religious life after that of their priests.

God will not fail to bless me, if I cultivate in my heart and manifest in my actions those truly religious dispositions demanded of me by my Christian faith and my sacred calling. He will enrich my soul with choice graces and favors, and enable me to spread abroad the spirit of Religion which is in me; and He will honor me in heaven with eternal glory, if I sincerely endeavor to honor Him in this world.

### III

Do I usually remember, when beginning Mass or the Divine Office, that I represent the Church, and especially the souls entrusted to me, in the presence of God Almighty?—With what care and devotion do I perform the various internal and external acts of Religion?—What attention do I give to the church, the altar, the sacred vessels and linen, the vestments, the liturgical ceremonies and music?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*
*"Tibi Deo Patri omnipotenti omnis honor et gloria."*

# *III. THE PRIEST'S SPIRITUAL LIFE*

## THE SOURCE OF VIRTUE

### 43. Piety

"EXERCE TEIPSUM AD PIETATEM" *(I Tim. iv. 7).*

I

"Exercise thyself unto godliness . . . Godliness is profitable to all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Not only does godliness, or piety, lead men to eternal joy, but it brings them happiness even in this world: "The Holy Ghost, by the mouths of all the saints, and our Savior by His own, assure us that a devout life is a life of all others the most sweet, happy, and amiable" (St. Francis of Sales). To value piety, the source of such blessings, I should first try to obtain a clear and perfect understanding of its true nature and various aspects.

II

The word "piety" (*pietas*) originally meant dutifulness to or love of parents, country, and God. St. Paul used it in the sense of religious homage, reverence, and service to God; this meaning has ever since prevailed in the languages of Christian nations. St. Francis of Sales and other spiritual writers used the word "devotion" to express the same idea. Piety can spring in the human soul either from the sense of duty, or from a desire for the benefits it brings, or from spontaneous attraction, or from these three sources at once: "As proceeding from the will, it is a virtue; as a spontaneous impulse, it is a gift of nature in some, in others a gift of grace" (*Hogan*).

Whatever may be its origin in each human soul, piety is necessary to all who consider themselves as God's children and Christ's disciples; it is essential to those who have been honored with the priestly character and entrusted with the priestly functions; for piety fosters frequent and intimate relations with Christ. What worthy priest can live apart from the intimacy of Him whose friendly greeting resounded so sweetly in his ears and in his soul, on the blessed day of his ordination: *"Jam non dicam vos servos, vos autem dixi amicos"?* What priest can feed his flock with divine life, without daily and constantly feeding his own soul in the heavenly pastures to which piety is the gate?

A truly pious priest loves prayer, which unites him with God and draws numberless blessings upon himself and the souls committed to his care. He is assiduous in the practices of devotion either prescribed to him as duties, or pointed out as efficient means to ends which he must reach; he therefore highly values the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the Divine Office, his daily visit to the Blessed Sacrament, his meditation, the Rosary, and the other devotions recommended by the Church. He has a taste for spiritual books, and likes to read the lives of the saints. In all this he is led only by the motives from which alone true piety can proceed.

True piety is not *pharisaic,* that is, prompted by vanity or by a desire to deceive others as to our real worth in spiritual matters; it is *genuine* and *sincere,* that is, born from and fostered by faith and charity.

True piety is not *superficial;* it does not consist mostly in external signs and formulas from which the mind and the heart are absent; it is not that sort of automatic piety which suggests the prayer-wheel and prayer-flag devotion of the Buddhist monks in Tibet; but it is *intelligent* and *real*, expressing the thoughts and sentiments that are within the soul.

It is not merely *sentimental*, depending on the uncertain and transitory support of spiritual consolations, "those little delicacies which God gives his children to allure them" (St. Francis of Sales); but it is *virile* and *strong*, based on the power of the will rather than on the changing and intermittent course of our feelings; it is therefore *perseverant*, in spite of continual dryness and numberless distractions.

True piety is not *selfish* and *fruitless*, seeking above all its own pleasure and enjoyment in the practices themselves, to the prejudice of other duties of justice, zeal, and charity; but it is *disinterested* and *fruitful*, being a source of that spiritual life which, keeping the soul closely united with Christ as the branches with the vine, manifests itself in all our actions, blooms forth into virtues, and overflows into other souls through an increase of zeal and charity. This is the test: if my piety is fruitful, it is true; if it is barren, it is false. If it makes me more humble, patient, charitable, pure, zealous, and self-sacrificing, then undoubtedly it is real and good; but if I derive little or no spiritual profit from it, for myself and for others, then it is sterile and false, in various degrees; this counterfeit of piety turns to the detriment of religion itself; for religion falls into contempt among men, when it appears empty and fruitless in those who practise it.

Do I sufficiently realize how necessary piety is in the life of a priest? Do I appreciate its blessings as

I ought?—Do I clearly understand what it should be in *me?*—What is, at present, the nature and degree of my piety, and what are its fruits?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Pietas ad omnia utilis est*" (I Tim. iv. 8).

## 44. PRAYER

"OPORTET SEMPER ORARE ET NON DEFICERE" *(Luke xviii. 1)*

### I

JESUS' life on earth was a life of prayer. At Nazareth He labored and prayed; He fasted and prayed forty days in the desert. During the three years of His public life, when the day's work was over, He often retired to a solitary place and spent the night in prayer. He prayed before raising Lazarus from the dead, He prayed in the glory of His Transfiguration, He prayed in the Cenacle, after the Last Supper, He prayed in His Agony, and He prayed on the Cross. We know that, at different times, He insisted on the necessity of prayer, and that He Himself taught His Apostles to pray.

*Acts of adoration, love.*

### II

ENLIGHTENED by Our Lord's example and teaching I need no further incentive to prayer. Yet I can understand the necessity of prayer from its very nature and purpose. St. John Chrysostom calls prayer "the life of our actions, the strong wall which protects our souls, the foundation of every spiritual edifice, the helm of the ship of grace, an element as necessary to our faculties as water is to the fish, the weapon intended to defend us against the enemies of our salvation, the wood with which the fire of divine love is kindled.''—"Prayer, as we know, consists in raising our mind and heart to God, in order to adore His greatness, to thank Him for His goodness, to ask from Him the pardon of our sins, and all the blessings we need for soul and body.'' Hence we easily realize why all men must pray. For all men owe the Lord a daily tribute of adoration, praise, and gratitude; all men must again and again appeal to God's mercy for their sins, as Our Lord Himself taught us to do, "forgive us our trespasses;'' all men depend on divine Providence and divine assistance to preserve and develop the life of both soul and body; all men need comfort and encouragement in the midst of hardship, suffering, and sorrow. Rightly therefore has prayer been called "the breathing of the soul''; for just as our body could not live if our lungs did not breathe, so neither could our soul live if we did not inhale divine grace through prayer.

But, if prayer is necessary to all men that they may fitly worship their Creator and work out their eternal salvation, it is still more essential to those who, by virtue of their sacred office, are bound to adore, praise, and thank God in the name of other men, to those whose duty it is to save not only their own souls, but also the souls entrusted to their care and guidance. This is a task which no human effort can accomplish without help from above; no one therefore can be a really worthy and successful priest, unless he be a *man of prayer*.

This indeed we readily believe. But do we not, at times, wonder why so many of our prayers seem to remain unanswered? Yet our Blessed Lord said:

"Ask, and you shall receive—If you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it you." Why then are so many of our prayers apparently fruitless? It is because we are not always in earnest when we kneel down to pray; we do not sufficiently realize our needs, and, as we ask for nothing in particular, our prayers are aimless; or we do not ardently desire to obtain what we are asking for, and our prayers are indifferent; or, at times, we may even fear lest our prayers be answered, as for instance, when we ask for the spirit of self-denial and self-sacrifice, or for the strength we need to give up an occasion of sin; then our prayers are not sincere. Perhaps also we have not sufficient confidence in God's kindness and mercy.

If we are really anxious to obtain from God some temporal or spiritual favors, we shall instinctively put our mind and heart in our prayers, that is, we shall truly pray; for without attention and devotion there can be no real prayer, since prayer implies the raising of our souls to God, not a mere utterance of words, however beautiful these may be in themselves. Prayer is like the fragrant cloud of incense which ascends from the altar toward the throne of the Almighty: "Let my prayer, O Lord, rise up like incense in Thy presence."

## III

Let then all my prayers be prompted by a real desire to honor God and to secure His blessings for myself and for others; let them be said with reverence, attention, and devotion; let them resound like harmonious notes worthy of being heard in that immense concert of praise, love, and gratitude, of mercy and entreaty, which unceasingly rises to Heaven from our churches, our homes, our fields, and our seas! Let them be as many channels constantly bringing God's grace into my heart and into the souls who depend on me for their eternal salvation, that it may bear in us all abundant fruit of piety and virtue!

Am I thoroughly convinced of the necessity of prayer for the interests of my soul and the success of my ministry?—Do I like prayer?—Do I faithfully discharge that important duty?—What are the principal defects of my prayers?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Recte novit vivere qui recte novit orare*" (St. Augustine).

## 45. MEDITATION

"ERAT PERNOCTANS IN ORATIONE DEI" *(Luke vi. 12)*

### I

"AND it came to pass, in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and He passed the whole night in the prayer of God." There we can see Our Lord in meditation, spending the night in close communion of mind and heart with His heavenly Father. We know that while He tasted the sweet and pure joy of meditation, on Mount Thabor, He also experienced its dryness and anguish in the Garden of the Agony.

*Acts of adoration, love.*

All those who have since endeavored to follow closely after Christ have loved and practised mental prayer, whether in the midst of sensible consolations or under the trying circumstances of spiritual aridity. May I also be persuaded to imitate their example!

## II

*Necessity*—"Without meditation," says St. Alphonsus, "we are without light, we walk in darkness. The truths of our holy faith cannot be perceived by the eyes of the body, but only by those of faith, through meditation. He who does not meditate, does not see them and, consequently, walks in darkness; in this state, he will more easily be allured by earthly objects and led to despise eternal goods."

Moreover, without meditation we can have only a very imperfect knowledge of ourselves, of our defects and evil inclinations, and we do little to correct the former and check the latter. "Meditation," says St. Bernard, "reveals what is wanting in us, and prayer obtains it for us; the one shows the way, the other helps to follow it. Meditation discovers the dangers that threaten us, prayer enables us to avoid them."

It is also through meditation that we clearly see, in God's light, the importance and extent of our duties as Christians and priests. Just as the business man, in the quiet of his home, reviews in his mind the transactions and events of the day, reflects on the causes of his success or failure, and plans his work for the morrow, so also the priest who makes his morning meditation, prepares, in God's presence, the task which awaits him, foresees the obstacles he must overcome, the dangers he must avoid, the opportunities he must seize, and prays for guidance and help. In that close contact with God he finds the recollection of mind, the purity of heart, and the fire of divine love that will enable him to stand at the altar as a worthy minister of the Holy Sacrifice which he is going to offer.

"How many advantages do we derive from meditation?'' says St. Alphonsus. ''It fills the soul with holy thoughts, pious affections, noble desires and firm resolutions to give herself entirely to God, to offer to the Lord the sacrifice of earthly pleasures and inordinate inclinations. Meditation is the school in which we learn to understand the true doctrine of the Gospel, in which we clearly see our own souls and discover our illusions concerning the things of this world which so often seduce us.'' Meditation enables us to know God's beauty and to taste his sweetness; it gradually brings us to resemble Our Lord whose example it constantly places before our eyes. ''As little children, by hearing their mothers talk, lisp at first, and learn at length to speak their language, so we, by keeping close to Our Savior by meditation, and by observing His words, actions, and affections, shall by the help of His grace learn to speak, to act, and to will like Him'' (St. Francis of Sales).

## III

*Time*—The best time for meditation is the early morning, before the daily stream of distractions and preoccupations invades my mind; this should be, preferably, before Mass, or, if this is not possible, immediately after Thanksgiving, for a meditation postponed is frequently omitted. Fidelity to meditation depends on regularity in rising at an appointed time determined by circumstances.

*Method*—It is for each one to choose the method of meditation which suits him best from among those practised by the saints or taught by spiritual writers. A simple and efficient manner of meditating consists in placing Jesus Christ *before our eyes, in our hearts,* and *in our hands:* before our eyes by considering the subject of our meditation in the light of Jesus' example and teaching; in our hearts, by arousing in us, in accordance with the subject, sentiments of admiration, adoration, gratitude, and love toward the Person of our Blessed Savior, of humility and contrition by realizing our own weakness and poverty, as well as sincere desires to share in Christ's perfection; in our hands, by forming definite and practical resolutions for the day.

Let not mental dryness and numberless distractions discourage me and deter me from the practice of meditation. St. Alphonsus says that "the meditation which is not accompanied by spiritual consolations is the most advantageous to the soul."—If, at times, I am not able to make my meditation, I should try to make up for it during the day, by means of ejaculatory prayers and short invocations, by reading some book of devotion, or by offering some little sacrifices.

Am I convinced of the necessity of meditation for my spiritual progress?—What is the principal obstacle that stands in the way of my daily meditation, and how can I remove it?—Do I derive real profit from the meditations I make? If not, what may be the causes of my failure?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Domine, doce nos orare"* (Luke xi. 1).

## 46. THE DIVINE OFFICE—*I. Its Purpose and Nature*

"CONFITEBOR TIBI, DOMINE, IN TOTO CORDE MEO"
*(Ps. 110)*

### I

GOD wants to be honored and praised in all the spiritual temples which He has built, that is, in all the human souls. But man, having defiled by sin the holiness of his inward temple, became thereby unworthy of fulfilling this sacred duty; having centered his thoughts, desires, and activity in his own earthly interests and pleasures, he neglected the very end for which he was created. Then the Son of God came among us to pay to His Father the tribute of praise and love which man denied or was unable to pay in full, and He now continues, on the altar and in the tabernacle, to offer this same homage which alone is worthy of God's infinite majesty. But, being hidden and silent in the Holy Eucharist, Our Lord uses the hearts and voices of those whom He has especially appointed and prepared for that office, in order to give both an inward and outward expression to the acts of adoration, praise, gratitude, reparation, and supplication which man owes his Creator, and which Christ performed for us in the most perfect manner.

*Acts of adoration, praise, love.*

## II

JESUS has chosen me as one of those whose voices must be heard in the spiritual concert which continually ascends from the earth to the throne of the Father in heaven. During the years of my youth, He purified and sanctified my heart and my lips, and then solemnly dedicated and consecrated the temple of my soul, on the day of my ordination to the Subdeaconship, that I might be, in His name and in the name of my fellowmen, a worthy worshipper of God Almighty. He placed in my hands the official Prayer-Book of His Church, that I might speak with Him for the countless number of those who refuse or neglect to praise and honor their Maker, and that I might make amends for those who insult and blaspheme His Holy Name. May I never lose sight of the greatness and holiness of so high an office! "*Confitebor tibi, Domine, in toto corde meo.*"

I will cry to Thee, O Lord, from the depth of my misery, for Thou art infinitely worthy of praise and love; the Church needs holy priests and faithful children, she needs guidance and peace, and it is my duty to ask for them in her name; the souls of men need light and strength, and it is for me to bring down upon them, by my prayers, thy enlightening and strengthening grace; I myself need thy assistance, at every moment, to be truly pious, chaste, zealous, and self-sacrificing; I need spiritual comfort, encouragement, and joy, and it is only in frequent and intimate relations with Thee that I can find them: "*Septies in die laudem dixi tibi.*" O Lord, teach me to pray; place Thy words on my lips, and Thy spirit in my heart.

If, besides the high and noble purpose of the Divine Office, I need further incentives to fervor in performing that sacred function, I shall find them in the very nature of that beautiful prayer. For what did the Church place before my eyes, in my hands, and in my heart, when entrusting me with the Breviary?—Before my eyes, she placed God Himself in whose presence I must stand while reading the sacred text; Our Lord Jesus Christ whose various mysteries are successively recalled throughout the Office, in the course of the liturgical year, Jesus Christ who prays in me and through me, and whose thought I constantly discover in the psalms, collects, and lessons of the

Breviary; a summary of the lives of the saints whose example can encourage me, and whose intercession can help me. What then, after the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, can more abundantly fill me with the spirit of Christ, and more surely enable me to live the life of a worthy priest?—In my hands, the Church placed the most beautiful of all her prayers: the "Our Father" which Our Lord Himself taught us to say, the Angelical Salutation partly brought down from heaven to earth, the Psalms inspired by the Holy Ghost to meet the needs of our souls in the course of ages; the collects, expressing the spirit of each feast, and admirable in their simplicity.—To my heart the Church offered the peace, rest, and spiritual comfort which can be found in the devout recitation of the Divine Office.

## III

WHAT an honor and what a joy for me to think that, several times a day, in union with Our Lord in the tabernacle, I must invite God's creatures to praise and bless their Creator: "*Benedicite omnia opera Domini, Domino,*" that I lend my voice to nature, men, and even angels, to make them honor with me our common Maker! Thus understood the recitation of the Breviary, far from being a burden, is a most welcome and pleasant duty. Was it not in this light that I considered it, and willingly accepted it, when it was entrusted to me? Have I kept this ideal to the present day? If not, for what reasons has it been lowered in my mind?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*
*"Magnificate Dominum mecum"* (Ps. 33).

## 47. THE DIVINE OFFICE—*II. Dispositions Required*

"TIBI SACRIFICABO HOSTIAM LAUDIS" *(Ps. 115)*

### I

PROMPTED by His desire to have His Father unceasingly honored and glorified by men, Our Lord has associated with Him the ministers of the altar in the sacred office of praise and prayer: *"Magnificate Dominum mecum, et exaltemus nomen ejus in idipsum"* (Ps. 33). I discharged this duty with true happiness and real fervor, on the days which immediately followed my ordination to the Subdeaconship. Would to God that I had never since deserved the blame inflicted upon the Head of the Church of Ephesus: "I have something against thee, because thou hast left thy first charity" (Apoc. ii. 4). Would to God that I had never, even momentarily, placed myself among those to whom Christ applied these words of Holy Writ: "This people honoreth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me" (Mark vii. 6).

*Acts of adoration, praise, love.*

### II

THAT I may not frustrate the hope of the Church who has entrusted me with the sacred office of praise and supplication in the name of all her children, that I may not disappoint the faithful who rely on the help of my prayers, that I may not deceive myself with the illusion that a hurried and thoughtless reading of the Breviary can bring me the blessings which this holy function promises, I must now recall to mind the dispositions required of those appointed to fulfill the official duty of praise and prayer. To show myself worthy of the confidence which the Church has placed in me, I should recite the Divine Office:

1—*Fideliter*, never considering myself exempt from this obligation, except for serious reasons foreseen and explained by the best theologians. I should fulfill this duty as soon as allowed by the rubrics for each part of the Office, if circumstances permit, that is: Matins and Lauds for the following day, in the late afternoon or in the evening, as a remote preparation for Mass; the Little Hours in the morning, at the first free moment; Vespers and Compline early in the afternoon.

2—*Digne*, in places which favor recollection instead of bringing distractions, either in the church, or in my room, or in some solitary spot; with liturgical accuracy secured by reading the rubrics or consulting the Ordo, with external as well as with internal reverence; without haste, being convinced that a few minutes more, spent in reading the Office, can make it a real prayer, while a hurried recitation results only in a meaningless mumbling of sounds and, consequently, in an entire loss of the time which I grudgingly devote to it. The book itself should be treated with respect, and, with the Bible, occupy a special place in my room.

3—*Attente*. Before beginning the Office, I should take at least a few seconds to free my mind from secular thoughts and preoccupations, to form my intentions, and unite myself with Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and with all those who are then discharging the same sacred duty, in various parts of the world; the prayer "*Aperi, Domine*" should be said slowly and with attention. I shall find it easier to concentrate my mind on the meaning of the liturgical text, if I make a careful study of the Psalms and of the other parts of the Old Testament from which passages have been selected for the Breviary. The practice of renewing my intentions before each Hour, and my attention at the "Gloria Patri" of each psalm, can but help me to avoid many distractions.

4—*Devote.* I should try to read the Office with my heart as well as with my eyes and my mind; for without love I cannot worthily praise and honor God, the source of all love. It is only on this condition that I can find in the recitation of the Divine Office spiritual joy and consolation. But I must remember that the love of God originates especially from the will, and not only from man's emotional faculties.—Finally, I can give unity to my spiritual life by connecting the recitation of the Divine Office with my meditation, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and my visit to the Blessed Sacrament.

Do I ordinarily make serious efforts to recite the Breviary *digne, attente, ac devote?*

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.* "*Benedicite Domino, omnes servi Domini*" (Ps. 133).

## 48. THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

### I—*Necessity, Excellence, Fruits*

"HOC FACITE IN MEAM COMMEMORATIONEM."

I

"Do THIS for a commemoration of me." Such was Christ's command to his apostles and their successors: "Do ye what I have just done in your presence. Take bread in your hands, and say 'This is my Body'; take the cup of wine mixed with water, and say 'This is the chalice of my Blood.'" There was not to be only one Mass offered, one Communion given; the Eucharistic presence of Jesus was not to be confined to one place, to last only one moment, for the benefit of a small group of men. Referring to the Institution of the Holy Eucharist, St. John said of Jesus: "Having loved *his own who were in the world,* He loved them unto the end;" he did not say "his apostles" alone, but "his own who were in the world," that is, all who were to believe in Him, in all ages and countries. For all those He was to be offered as a victim, to all those He was to be given as the Bread from heaven, with all those He was to remain present till the end of time.

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, love.*

## II

On the day of my ordination to the Holy Priesthood, I heard the ordaining Bishop, a successor of the apostles, say to me, in compliance with the Master's command: "*Accipe potestatem offerre sacrificium Deo.*" I had then a vivid realization of the sublime power conferred upon me; I clearly understood what it meant with respect to God's glory, the salvation of souls, and my own personal sanctification. If that exalted and true idea of the Holy Sacrifice has been, since, more or less obscured in my mind through my own negligence and sins, through my daily and unavoidable contact with worldly things and temporal preoccupations, I must now endeavor to rekindle the sacred flame and stir the sacred fire which once brought so much light, joy, strength, and love into my life, by considering the necessity, excellence, and fruits of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

1—*Necessity.*—We owe tribute to God as subjects to their king, in order to acknowledge His supreme power and dominion over us; we owe Him victims in atonement for our sins. The great majority of men have always, more or less perfectly, understood this obligation; in all countries and ages, they have set apart, from among created beings, those which they considered most worthy on account of their strength, beauty, youth, and innocence, and they have offered them to the Author of life. But the victims of Jew and Gentile were unable to pay our debt of adoration to God's majesty, of gratitude to His kindness, of reparation to His justice; for the distance which separates God from His creatures is infinite, and the Infinite alone can bridge it over. Now, through Christ's merits offered by us on the altar, we are able to pay to God the infinite a tribute of infinite adoration, gratitude, and expiation, we possess an infinite power of intercession; for, at Mass, we have God Himself adoring, thanking, atoning, and praying in our name.

2—*Excellence.*—If I understand the Sacrifice of the Cross, I cannot fail to realize the excellence of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. For, at the altar, we have the very same Priest who officiated on Mount Calvary, we have the very same Victim that was offered there. Jesus Christ, the Priest of Golgotha, is not visible to human eyes in the Mass; the Lamb of God is not seen on the altar with His bruised and torn flesh, with blood dripping from His countless wounds; yet He is truly present there as a priest, in the person of him to whom He has delegated his power and office; He is truly present there as a victim, the same that bled, suffered, and died on the Cross. Now God the Father can truly say: *"In omni loco offertur in nomine meo oblatio munda."*

3—*Fruits.*—"When a priest celebrates," says the author of the *Following of Christ*, "he honors God, he rejoices the angels, he edifies the Church, he helps the living, he obtains rest for the dead, and makes himself partaker of all that is good," (iv-v. 3). Infinite honor to God, unspeakable joy to angels and saints, invaluable help to many souls struggling here-below in the midst of danger and trial, relief and eternal happiness to the departed expiating their sins in Purgatory, light, strength, and heavenly comfort to the priest himself, such are the principal fruits of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

## III

Do I sufficiently value the precious treasure which lies open to me, every morning? Am I eager to draw from it abundantly for myself and for others?—Should I ever neglect, without serious reasons, to raise the Sacred Host and Chalice to heaven, that I may send up to God the only homage worthy of His infinite majesty, and bring down upon men innumerable and priceless blessings?—Do I consider the Holy Sacrifice as the bright Sun which alone can cheer and guide me, every day, and impart merit and fruitfulness to my life?—Am I convinced that, because I stand at the altar as a mediator between God and sinful men, because I hold in my hands the source of all holiness and purity, I am bound to greater perfection, and ought to be adorned with all virtues?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Introibo ad altare Dei"*

## 49. THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

### II—*Dispositions Required*

"MALEDICTUS QUI FACIT OPUS DEI NEGLIGENTER"
*(Jerem. xlviii. 10).*

### I

"LO! THOU art made a priest, and art consecrated to say Mass; see now that in due time thou faithfully and devoutly offer up sacrifice to God, and that thou behave thyself in such a manner as to be without reproof" (*Imit*. iv-v. 2). If I understand the excellence of the Holy Sacrifice, I necessarily know and feel that I must bring to the altar such dispositions as can make me a worthy minister of so great a function. May Our Lord Jesus Christ, the High Priest from whose kindness I have received the powers of the Priesthood, help me to realize what those dispositions ought to be in me!

### II

*The Preparation.*—"The priest," says St. Lawrence Justinian, "must approach the altar with the dispositions of Christ going up to Calvary, and he must offer the Holy Sacrifice like a Saint." A priest who shares in the spirit of Christ and of His saints, will strive, in so far as human weakness allows, to secure the following dispositions as a preparation for Mass.

1—*Purity of Soul.*—This implies not only exemption from grievous sins, but also freedom from affection to deliberate venial sin. If a priest happens to be in a doubtful state of conscience, he should preferably seek peace of soul in a worthy confession, before going to the altar, or, if this is not possible, he should try to make an act of perfect contrition. Every day, he should ask pardon of God for even his slightest faults, before he approaches the sacred mystery, remembering these words of St. John Chrysostom: "How pure should that hand be which immolates the Body of the Word Incarnate! How spotless that tongue which is purpled with the blood of Jesus! and how clean that heart into which the infinite purity of a Man God is received together with all His other attributes!"—"Let thy grace, O Almighty God, assist us, that we, who have undertaken the office of the priesthood, may serve Thee worthily and devoutly in all purity and good conscience" (*Imit.* iv-xi. 8).

2—*Recollection.*—"*Fæctum est magnum silentium in cælo, quasi media hora*" (Apoc. viii. 1). How fitly St. John's words can apply to the priest who is about to offer the Holy Sacrifice! There should be a deep silence in his soul, that he may speak to Jesus and hear His voice. When he enters the church, let him leave outside all distracting thoughts and preoccupations; let him not break this internal silence by unnecessary remarks or conversations; let him kneel down, at least for a few minutes, to form or renew his intentions, to revive in his heart sentiments of faith, religion, and love, and, if time permits, to read the preparatory prayers.

3—*Reverence.*—To internal preparation the priest should add external neatness of body and dress. He should make sure that the chalice, corporal, pall, and altar cloth are kept clean, that the vestments are neither torn, nor ruffled, nor stained, and that the altar boys are properly clad. Carelessness in this regard would show lack of inward reverence for God, and would unfavorably impress the congregation.—While vesting the priest should devoutly say the prayers prescribed. He should always begin Mass at the appointed hour, for the convenience of the people.

*Celebration.*—If the priest remembers that he represents Christ at the altar and acts in His name, that he is a mediator between God and man, he will instinctively behave with the dignity, reverence, and piety befitting such an august function. He will recite or read the liturgical prayers distinctly and devoutly, without undue slowness, but also without haste, being convinced that he has nothing more important and sacred to do during the day; St. Benedict maintains that half an hour is necessary *"ab amictu ad amictum"* to secure external reverence in the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice.—He will avoid singularity and mannerism in his tone of voice as well as in his gestures and deportment; he will not recite aloud the prayers which are to be said in silence.

He will endeavor to keep his soul in deep and solemn peace, as if he were alone in the world before God's infinite majesty; he will share in the intentions of Our Lord on the Cross, and unite with Him in adoration, thanksgiving, propitiation, and supplication.

He will try to concentrate his mind on the meaning of the liturgical text which he reads or recites, and to arouse in his heart sentiments of humble and sincere contrition at the *Confiteor* and *Kyrie eleison,* of deep faith when genuflecting after the Consecration, of holy desire and love before Communion. While raising the paten and the chalice, at the Offertory, he will add to the Matter of the Sacrifice his own good works, prayers, and acts of mortification.

A priest animated with such dispositions will have nothing to fear from the dreadful words of the Prophet: "*Maledictus qui facit opus Dei negligenter.*"

*Thanksgiving.*—Gratitude to God is one of the principal duties of religion. Our Lord Himself reminded us of this obligation when He praised the leper who had come to thank Him, after his cure, and complained of the ingratitude of the nine others. Which of God's gifts calls for more gratitude than that of the Holy Sacrifice and Holy Communion? Worthy priests have always considered Thanksgiving after Mass as one of the most valuable practices of their sacerdotal life. "*Quid retribuam Domino pro omnibus quae retribuit mihi?*"—"*Gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro.*"

What more precious and happy moments can there be for a priest, every day, than those few minutes spent in an intimate union and conversation with Christ present in his soul? How quickly they pass, if he knows how to fill them with acts of adoration, gratitude, reparation, and love, and with fervent prayers for his own needs, for the Church, and for the various classes of souls who can claim his intercession! This is for him the favorable time to draw life from Christ's Heart into his own, that he may be able to say, with St. Paul, during the rest of the day: "*Vivo, jam non ego, vivit vero in me Christus.*" (Gal. ii. 20.)

Are those the dispositions which I usually bring to the preparation for Mass, to its celebration, and to thanksgiving?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*
*"Quis ascendet in montem Domini? Innocens manibus et mundo corde."* (Ps. 23.)

## 50. CONFESSION

### "AMPLIUS LAVA ME AB INIQUITATE MEA"

### I

"THEN cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan, unto John, to be baptized by him. But John stayed Him, saying: I ought to be baptized by Thee, and comest Thou to me? And Jesus answering, said to him: Suffer it to be so now. For it becometh us to fulfill all justice." (Matt. iii. 13-15.) I may well wonder, with St. John the Baptist, why Christ, who was to baptize "in the Holy Ghost and fire," came together with sinful men to ask of John the Baptism of water unto penance. Was He not the Holy One of God, the innocent Lamb who alone could challenge His enemies, saying: *"Quis ex vobis arguet me de peccato?"* Yet He insisted on being subjected to the symbolic rite of purification from sin. What a lesson for me a sinner, if, after receiving from Christ the power of forgiving sins, I was tempted to neglect the cleansing of my own soul through the same wonderful means. Grant, O Lord, that I may more vividly realize the reasons why, because of my weakness as a man and of my greatness as a priest, I should love and value the practice of frequent confession.

*Acts of adoration, love.*

### II

EVERY priest is taken, not from among angels, but from among men, that "he may have compassion on them that are ignorant and that err: because he himself also is compassed with infirmity.'' (Hebr. v. 2.) Being therefore made up not only of a spiritual substance, like angels, but also of a material body, like other human creatures, I am bound to experience the rebellion of the flesh against the spirit, and of the spirit against the will of its Creator. The greatest saints have, like St. Paul, felt the sting of temptation: how can I expect to be free from it? Would that I were always as courageous and strong as they were in resisting the enemies of my salvation! If therefore, through human weakness, I offend in any way my God and Master, I know that Christ has shed His Precious Blood for me as well as for other men, that His infinite mercy is open to me also, that I am not only the minister of the Sacrament of Penance, but its subject as well. What I do for others in the Sacred Tribunal, a fellow-priest can do for me also; purified and strengthened by the grace of absolution, guided by the advice of my confessor, and helped by my own resolutions, after each confession I can begin anew to love and serve God with greater generosity and zeal.

Moreover, when I consider how pure and holy a priest should be to offer the divine Victim, to cleanse sinners in the name of Christ, to guide righteous souls to greater perfection and handle them without staining them, I realize that I must have recourse to God's mercy still more frequently than those who have not been honored with the priestly character and entrusted with the priestly office. If such a holy priest as St. Francis of Sales thought it expedient to purify his soul by daily confession, how can I deem it superfluous to confess my sins once a week, or, at least, once every other week?

To derive real profit from my confessions, it is important that I should select as my confessor a priest of good judgment, of competent knowledge, and of truly priestly habits; to secure regularity in the practice of confession, I should choose a confessor living in the neighborhood and easy of access, and I should present myself, if possible, on an appointed day and at an appointed hour.

My confession should not, through habit, become a mere religious formality. I should therefore carefully guard against routine in this matter, and be led only by a sincere desire to purify and strengthen my soul through the virtue of the Sacrament of Penance.

I know what dispositions are required for a worthy and fruitful confession: a humble, simple, and entire avowal of my faults, a sincere contrition, a real desire to amend my life and to do penance for my past sins. These dispositions, which I expect to find in my own penitents, must be still more perfect in me, since I am bound to greater purity of soul by my character and office.

My advancement in virtue and piety will be greatly furthered by a definite and practical resolution, made or renewed at each confession, to watch myself on one particular point, preferably on my ruling passion or principal defect, and to make it the subject of my daily examination of conscience.

I am well aware that the penance imposed by the confessor is far from being sufficient to supply the satisfaction required of me for my past sins, and to protect me from sin in the future. I must then accept, in a spirit of penance, the sufferings, trials, and hardships which may cross my path, and set myself generously to the practice of mortification of the senses, of the imagination, the heart, the will, in the details of my daily life.

What an abundant source of peace, courage, and confidence I can find in frequent confession thus understood and practised!—Do I feel that I am deriving real profit from my confessions for my spiritual progress?—If not, what should I do to make them more fruitful?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"A peccato meo munda me."*

# IV. THE PRIEST'S APOSTOLIC LIFE

## 51. The Apostleship of Example

"EXEMPLUM ESTO FIDELIUM" *(Tim. iv. 12)*.

### I

The Word of God, the Light of the world, spent thirty years of His life on earth in silent retreat, "*Verbum silens.*" During that long period of time, He neither spoke to the multitudes nor taught in the synagogues; yet He was then carrying on the great work of our salvation, by exemplifying in His own Person the virtues which He was to preach later, "*Exemplar virtutum.*" Christ, therefore, began His mission by practising what He intended to teach, and in His public life also, He drew men to virtue by example still more than by words, "*cœpit facere et docere.*" Such was the method which His Apostles were to follow; for, long before He ordered them to go forth and teach all nations, He had said to them: "*Sic luceat lux vestra coram hominibus, ut videant opera vestra bona, et glorificent Patrem vestrum qui in cœlis est.*" Am I wiser than Christ Himself? Can I, for a moment, hesitate to acknowledge that the example of a holy life is by far the most efficient form of preaching, and a necessary condition for the worthy and successful fulfilment of all my priestly duties? *Acts of adoration, love.*

### II

Preaching the word of God is clearly one of the most important functions of a priest. But I know from my own experience how difficult a task it is, and how uncertain its results are. Catholics, it is true, need religious instruction perhaps more in our day than ever before; but it is also true that many of them show little desire for it: many of the most ignorant in matters of religion are not present at our sermons, while others listen to us with minds distracted and spiritually dulled by temporal cares and earthly preoccupations. On the other hand, we feel that it is not always easy for us to present the doctrine of the Church in a manner so clear as to be understood by all, so attractive as to command the attention of all, so striking as to make a lasting impression in the minds of all. But preaching by example overcomes these difficulties; for virtue and piety exemplified in the life of a priest cannot fail to be noticed and understood by all. The mere sight of the Curé of Ars genuflecting and kneeling before the tabernacle was far more efficient than a set of sermons on the Real Presence.

Example, moreover, preaches unceasingly. A holy priest preaches in the church by his faith and piety, in public places by his modest demeanor, at home by the simplicity of his life, in parochial or social relations by his affability and kindness, everywhere by his self-denial and self-devotion. This silent preaching reaches not only the minds but also the hearts of those who are the witnesses of it. If we ask the older members of our flock who are those of their priests who made the best and deepest impression in the parish, and who are remembered with the greatest reverence and love, they will invariably mention the names of some exemplary and edifying men, even though they may have known others of greater talent and popularity. Careless or fallen-away Catholics, heretics and unbelievers themselves are often favorably impressed and influenced by the virtues of holy priests: *"Liber laicorum vita clericorum."*

Is it necessary to add that, without the reverence and trust inspired by the sight of an exemplary life, a priest cannot successfully discharge the important duties of his office? With what authority can he preach a doctrine by which his own life does not seem to be constantly guided? How sincerely can he rebuke others for faults which he himself is not careful enough to avoid? How can he exhort them to the practice of virtues which he himself neglects? How can he win the confidence of sinners so as to bring them to the confessional and the altar rail, unless he shows himself, by his life, an open and unrelenting enemy of sin in all its forms? How can he win the confidence of holy souls aiming at a higher degree of perfection, unless he is known as a man of God? Will they seek his advice and guidance, unless they feel that he can truly say to them, as St. Paul did to the early Christians: *"Imitatores mei estote, sicut et ego Christi"?*

These considerations are indeed sufficient to revive or strengthen in my mind the conviction that an exemplary life is the first duty of a priest, and that, without it, his ministry is bound to remain fruitless. This I clearly realized on the day of my ordination to the Holy Priesthood, when I heard the beautiful exhortation of the Pontifical: *"Sit odor vitæ vestræ delectamentum Ecclesiæ Christi, ut prædicatione et exemplo ædificetis domum, id est, familiam Dei."*

## III

I WILL therefore always consider it an essential obligation of my sacerdotal office to give the example of a truly pious, laborious, and virtuous life, *openly* and *constantly.—Openly:* not indeed with that vain and unnecessary display of righteousness which seeks human glory, not with the fault-finding dispositions of a public censor, but with simplicity and good judgment, and also with the independence and fearlessness of a man who, knowing his duty, is determined to fulfill it regardless of criticism, and is ever mindful of his Master's words: "*Sic luceat lux vestra coram hominibus.*"—*Constantly,* that is, in all things; for if my conduct were seriously open to censure even on one point only, this would undoubtedly diminish my authority, and weaken my power for the sanctification of souls: "*Exemplum esto fidelium in verbo, in conversatione, in caritate, in fide, in castitate,*" (I Tim. iv. 12); and the Council of Trent adds: "*aliisque omnibus rebus.*"

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*
*Exemplum esto fidelium.*

## 52. PREACHING

### "SACERDOTEM OPORTET PRÆDICARE" *(Pontifical)*

### I

WHEN the time came for Jesus to enter upon His public ministry, He at once began to preach by word as well as by example. We then see Him delivering His divine message to all, to the Pharisees and to the Publicans, to the rich and to the poor, to the learned and to the ignorant; we follow Him in His tiresome journeys through Judea and Galilee, we listen to Him teaching in the Temple, in towns and villages, in the desert, on the waters, and on the mountain side. The crowds heard His words with respect and admiration, because He spoke with that sovereign authority which belonged to Him alone as the Son of God and the Messenger of His heavenly Father, and which shone forth from the very nature of His speech, and radiated from the holiness of His life: *"Admirabantur turbæ super doctrina ejus; erat enim docens eos tanquam potestatem habens."* (Matt. vii. 28.) He attracted and captivated them by the sweetness and persuasive power of His words as well as by the love and zeal which prompted them: *"Omnes testimonium illi dabant et mirabantur in verbis gratiæ quæ procedebant ab ore ejus"* (Luke iv. 22). Never before had human speech spread such light, and brought such peace and consolation to men: *"Nunquam sic locutus est homo sicut homo iste"* (John vii. 46).

*Acts of adoration, praise.*

## II

WAS that divine light to be extinguished, was that new and wonderful source of strength, peace, and true happiness to be for ever dried up through the ingratitude and the cruel madness of the Jews? No, for it was meant to enlighten, strengthen, and comfort every man coming into the world. Christ therefore, on leaving this world, gave to His followers this supreme command: *"Euntes ergo in universum mundum, prædicate evangelium omni creaturæ."* The apostles understood and obeyed their Master's order, and soon the pagan lands resounded with the words of life uttered by their lips: *"In omnem terram exivit sonus eorum, et in fines orbis terræ verba eorum."* From the hour of the Sermon on the Mount to the present time, Christ's voice has never been silent; it has continued to be heard, day and night, gradually spreading over the earth until it reached its utmost confines.

I am one of those chosen by Our Lord to hold the divine light before men, one of those to whom the Master said: "*Vos estis lux mundi,*" since I am a priest and as such must preach the word of God: "*Sacerdotem oportet prædicare.*" The Pontifical does not say "*licet,*" but "*oportet.*" Preaching therefore is one of my most essential duties, a duty necessary at all times, since the just man lives by faith, and faith comes only from hearing God's word, "*fides ex auditu;*" a duty which is certainly of vital importance in our own day. When Pius X, in his Encyclical of April 15th, 1905, endeavored to point out the various causes of the religious crisis which our age is undergoing, it was especially to ignorance in matters of religion that he ascribed the present spiritual weakness in individuals, and the social evils which are its natural consequences. The priest of the present day is therefore especially bound to remember the "*oportet prædicare*" of his ordination, and should consider St. Paul's exhortation to his disciple Timothy as applying particularly to himself: "*Prædica verbum, insta opportune, importune*" (II Tim. iv. 2).

But I must not only be determined to obey Christ's command "*prædicate;*" I must also fully understand its meaning; for Our Lord said: "Prædicate *Evangelium.*" Bossuet thus sums up the teaching of the Fathers of the Church on this important subject: "The apostolic man," he says, "has been entrusted with the mission of giving the Word of God to souls, under two sensible signs, the symbol of the Eucharistic species, and the medium of the human language. The priest who, at the altar, would give the faithful a purely material bread, would make himself guilty of an abominable fraud; in the same manner, the priest who, from the pulpit, would not distribute the word of God, but a foreign doctrine, would commit the sin of prevarication. For souls can live only on God's, not on man's word." Therefore it is not ourselves, our own talent and personality, our own thoughts and opinions that we must display before our hearers, but Christ and His doctrine: "*Non enim nosmetipsos prædicamus, sed Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum*" (Cor. iv. 5). Our Lord Himself taught men the doctrine which He had received from His Father: "*Doctrina mea, non est mea, sed ejus qui misit me Patris.*" (John vii. 16.) The disciple is expected to follow the Master's example and, consequently, to transmit only the doctrine and precepts which he has received from Christ through the Gospels and the Church. "The Symbol of the Apostles, the divine Decalogue, the Commandments of the Church, the Sacraments, the virtues and vices, the duties special to each condition, the last ends of man, and other truths of this kind, supply the subjects to which the preacher must devote his word" (Pius X, Encycl.). We must then preach not only our moral and religious obligations, but also the doctrine on which they are firmly grounded.

## III

If I am, as I want to be, a priest filled with the spirit of Christ and of His Apostles, I should never forget that the word of God is to be treated with the greatest care and reverence. I will therefore neglect nothing to prepare myself for the discharge of a duty so sacred and so essential. This implies serious and constant efforts, on my part, to increase my knowledge and fittingly develop my power of expression.

No priest should easily persuade himself that he is sufficiently acquainted with the doctrine he has to teach or the subject he has to treat; for the more thoroughly he has mastered it, the more clearly and efficiently he can explain it, in a manner well adapted to the condition and needs of his audience.

But it is not enough for a preacher to have at his disposal an abundant supply of good and sound material, he must also endeavor to present his ideas in a form that can command respect and attention, arouse interest, and, at times, with a power that can move the heart and the will of the hearer. He should therefore cultivate the art of style and composition, develop and train his vocal organs, aim at a distinct, varied, and intelligent delivery. For we now appear before congregations which are better educated and, consequently, more exacting in matters of public speaking, than most of our people were in the past.

Finally, to make his preaching really fruitful, a priest should not depend only on his talent and on his efforts. He must remember that, if the husbandman ploughs the soil and sows the seed, God alone can give the increase: in like manner, the seed of God's word shall not spring up and grow, unless it is quickened by the dew of divine grace. It is therefore at the Altar, in the recitation of the Divine Office, and before the Tabernacle, that a priest can prepare real success for his sermons, by praying that the grace of God may accompany his words and make them bear fruit of salvation in the souls of the hearers.

Are these the dispositions with which I ordinarily fulfill this important office? Can I consider my general training for the pulpit as sufficient, from a physical, intellectual, and spiritual standpoint? What should I do to make up for what is lacking in it? Do I take a real interest in the preparation of each sermon? Do I always ask for God's assistance that my preaching may bear fruit in the souls of those who hear me?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Prædicate evangelium omni creaturæ."*

## 53. THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

### "NON VENI VOCARE JUSTOS SED PECCATORES"

### I

"Now the publicans and sinners drew near unto Him to hear Him. And the Pharisees and the Scribes murmured, saying: This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them. And He spoke to them this parable, saying: What man of you hath an hundred sheep: and if he shall lose one of them, doth he not leave the ninety-nine in the desert, and go after that which was lost until he find it? And when he hath found it, lay it upon his shoulders, rejoicing: and coming home call together his friends and neighbors, saying to them: rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost? I say to you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance." (Luke xv, 1-7.)

From these words we understand the reason why Jesus went about, not only curing the ailments of the body, but also healing the wounds of the soul. To the penitent woman kneeling at His feet, He said: "Thy sins are forgiven thee," and to the poor adulteress: "Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and now sin no more."

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, love.*

## II

But what was to become of poor sinners, when Christ, after pouring out of His Sacred Heart treasures of mercy and love, would have returned to His Father? Were they never again to hear the forgiving words?—God's infinite mercy is not limited either by time or space; it has no other bounds than His justice. And so, before leaving this world, Jesus appeared to His Apostles, saying: "Peace be to you." He then breathed on them, and added: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." (John xx. 22-23.) Thus did Our Lord entrust the "ministry of reconciliation" to His Apostles and their successors; thus was the peace from above to come down into the souls of men of good will, until the end of time; thus was the dispensation of divine mercy placed in my hands, on the day of my ordination.

To reconcile sinners with God, and restore peace to troubled hearts; to bring back to the fold the wandering sheep, to set them again on the right path and direct them safely to the heavenly pastures; to prepare souls for the Eucharistic Banquet where they can find strength in their weakness, light in their doubts, courage in their fear, and consolation in their trials; to raise pure souls still nearer to God, and purify those who are about to appear before the sovereign Judge: such is the wonderful office committed to me as a minister of the Sacrament of Penance; if it implies hardships, it certainly bears most precious fruits, and is therefore worthy of the greatest care and zeal on my part.

## III

How then can I show myself a faithful and worthy dispenser of a grace so powerful for the sanctification and salvation of souls?

The Good Shepherd did not wait for the lost sheep to come back to the fold; He sought them, pursued them, spared Himself neither work nor fatigue until He had found them and brought them back to safety. In like manner, a zealous priest uses all the means at his disposal, the pulpit, the school, friendly visits, charitable and social works, Catholic literature, etc. . . , to approach sinners, win their confidence, enlighten their minds, move their hearts, and bring them to the sacred Tribunal of Penance.

He makes his confessional easy of access to all, by his punctuality in hearing penitents at the appointed hours, and by his willingness to discharge, at all times, so important an office, especially in favor of those who seldom have recourse to it. With patience and fatherly kindness he encourages and helps his penitents, in the frequently painful and sometimes lengthy avowal of their sins, knowing that impatience, reproof, or severity on the part of the confessor would probably disturb or wound them, and perhaps keep them away from the confessional in the future.—The sense of his priestly dignity and the sacredness of the function which he performs are more than sufficient to make him carefully avoid any familiar remarks or indiscreet questions which might prove either dangerous to himself or harmful to his penitents.

Being conscious that he sits in the confessional as a judge and a physician of souls, he does not rely solely on his own good judgment, but feels in duty bound to acquire or increase his knowledge of the principles which will enable him to solve, according to the laws and spirit of the Church, the many cases of conscience submitted to him, to diagnose correctly the spiritual diseases of his penitents, and prescribe suitable remedies. He therefore devotes some time, every week, to the study of Moral Theology and of treatises dealing with the direction of souls. "*Ars artium regimen animarum.*" (St. Gregory the Great.) When he deems it necessary, he questions his penitents, with prudence and discretion, tactfully avoiding whatever might alarm their sense of modesty or suggest evil to innocent souls, being resigned even to sacrifice the material integrity of a confession to propriety and moral expediency. He is especially careful, in this regard, in the case of children and adolescents.

He does not neglect to instruct the ignorant, in so far as time permits, in the essential truths of our holy faith, in their religious obligations and duties of state.—Guided by the laws of God and of His Church, and prompted by his sincere desire to save souls, he is neither too strict nor too lax in matters of absolution and spiritual direction. When in doubt, in serious cases, he defers his decision, if possible, until he has studied the question or consulted competent authorities.

For fear of breaking the seal of confession, even indirectly and in the slightest manner, he carefully abstains from any allusion to what he has heard in the confessional, and always speaks of his penitents with due reserve.

Finally, being convinced that, without divine assistance, his ministry as a confessor would bear but little fruit, he kneels down to pray before entering the confessional, and frequently recommends his penitents to God's mercy and kindness. For their conversion and sanctification, he does not hesitate to go one step farther and to unite in sacrifice and mortification with Our Lord on Calvary.

Can I give testimony to myself that I have observed these rules laid down by learned theologians, and also by experienced and holy confessors?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Ars artium regimen animarum.'*

## 54. THE PRIEST AND CHILDREN

### "SINITE PARVULOS VENIRE AD ME."

### I

"AND they brought Him young children, that He might touch them. And the disciples rebuked those that brought them. Whom when Jesus saw, He was much displeased, and saith to them: Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not. For of such is the kingdom of God. And embracing them, and laying His hands upon them, He blessed them." (Mark x. 13-16.) On another occasion, Jesus calling unto Him a little child, and setting him in the midst of His disciples, said to them: "He that shall receive one such little child in My name, receiveth Me. . . . See that you despise not one of these little ones. . . . It is not the will of your Father in Heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.'' (Matt. xviii. 5, 10, 14.) We see how tenderly Jesus loved children, and how earnestly He commended them to the care of His Apostles and of their successors.

*Acts of adoration, love.*

## II

THE importance of the priest's work among children can never be too highly estimated. ''What mission is greater than that of governing the souls and fashioning the morals of children?'' says St. John Chrysostom; ''assuredly no sculptor, painter, or any other artist attains to the height of him who possesses the art of bringing up the young.''—''To teach children the mysteries of religion,'' says St. John Baptist de la Salle, ''and to give them the spirit of Christianity is not less good than to procure the conversion of infidels.'' Young souls are the good soil into which the seed of faith, piety, and virtue must be sown, that it may spring up and grow into the rich harvest of a truly Christian life. No soil is more fertile, more responsive to intelligent cultivation, than the souls of children. It is in childhood and early youth that the human soul can most easily be moulded after the image of Christ; for it is then capable of receiving deep and lasting impressions. Is it not then of the utmost importance that those early impressions should be such as to imprint the image of Christ in the souls of the young? To them can these words of St. Paul to the Galatians most appropriately be applied: ''My little children, of whom I am in labor again, until Christ be formed in you.'' (iv. 19.) The priest is the artist especially prepared and commissioned by Our Lord to do that great work. What guilt he would incur, what dreadful responsibility he would assume, if he neglected this essential duty, or left it entirely in the hands of persons who have not, as he has, directly received it from God and His Church!

## III

What means have I at my disposal to fulfill my obligations, in the best possible manner, towards the children entrusted to my care?

1—*The Sunday-School* is assuredly the easiest and the most efficient. For it is especially by teaching our holy religion that a priest lays, in each soul, the foundation stones of a Christian life, that is, the great truths of our faith, the precepts of moral conduct and religious duties. Thus it is that a priest can train children not only in the knowledge, but also in the practice of their religion; thus it is that he can inspire them with a love of virtue and a horror of sin, with a taste for piety, with reverence towards God's ministers, in short, with all the noble ideas and sentiments that characterize a true Christian. Is not this work most worthy of a priest's personal care and zeal?

I should therefore do all in my power to make it bear abundant fruit: Frequent opportunities, looked for and secured, to catechise children; punctuality in teaching at the appointed time, and firmness in exacting regular attendance; training and direction of the catechists as to teaching and discipline; study of the best catechetical works and methods; careful preparation of each class, which should aim not only at instructing with clearness and thoroughness, but also at arousing interest, imparting life and variety to my explanation of the text, foreseeing appropriate questions and satisfactory answers, striking illustrations, useful exhortations and practical applications; written work by the children, whenever possible, examinations and rewards: nothing should be neglected that can contribute to the success of a work so essential to the interests of the individuals, of the Church, and of society.

2—*The Parish School*—The priest's ministry among children is naturally easier and more fruitful in parishes which are fortunate enough to possess a Catholic school. The Catholic school has been rightly called "the novitiate of Christianity."—"It is the nursery in which children, like young trees, are reared with care until they are transplanted into society, to be its ornaments by their edifying lives, and to bring forth fruits of santification"—(Brother Philip). There, in a favorable atmosphere, the child not only is taught the doctrine and precepts of the Church, but is also trained, day by day, by the word and example of his teachers, to live the life of a good Christian. He is taught "to will practically, energetically, and through motives of faith, what is good, just, and true; he is made strong against temptations, armed for the struggle of life and enabled to come forth from it victorious."—There also his innocence can be better protected against the corruption of the world.

How dear therefore is the Catholic school to the heart of a priest! How lovingly he supervises its work, how willingly he helps and encourages the devoted teachers, how carefully and judiciously he endeavors to ward off the occasions which might endanger the virtue of the pupils, how zealously he directs them to confession and Holy Communion!

3—*Works of Preservation*—The priest's work for the younger members of his flock does not end with the Catechism and the School. He must follow them up; for their faith and morals have to face many dangers, when they are out in the world. Hence arises the necessity of Catholic sodalities, clubs, societies, and organizations of various sorts which aim at safeguarding and developing the results of the work previously done, and at keeping the Catholic youth under the beneficial influence of their priests.

Do I sufficiently realize the extent of my duties to the younger members of the parish? With what care and zeal do I fulfill them?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Non est voluntas ante Patrem vestrum, qui in cœlis est, ut pereat unus de pusillis istis.*"

## 55. THE PRIEST AND THE SICK

### "INFIRMUS ERAM, ET VISISTASTIS ME"

### I

THERE is nothing more touching in Jesus than His tender compassion for the sick and the afflicted. When reading the Gospel, we see Him again and again making use of His divine power over the human body to relieve man's sufferings. By a word, a look, a touch, Jesus heals the servant of the Centurion, raises the infirm man at Bethsaida from his bed of pain, cleanses the lepers, cures the paralytic at Capharnaum, restores sight to the blind, hearing and speech to the deaf and dumb. "All the multitude sought to touch Him, for virtue went out from Him, and healed all." (Luke vi. 19.) To impress upon His disciples the importance of their duty of sympathy and assistance to the sick and the suffering, He praises the compassionate and charitable Samaritan, while He censures the indifferent and selfish conduct of the Levite and of the Priest of the Old Law. He makes the misfortune of the afflicted His own, threatening dreadful punishment on those who ignore it: "Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire. . . . For I was sick, and you did not visit Me;" while He promises eternal reward to those who sympathize with their fellow-men in the midst of their sufferings: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. . . . For I was sick, and you visited Me" (Matt. xxv. 31-46).

*Acts of adoration, gratitude, love.*

## II

I CANNOT, like Christ and His Apostles, like the Saints, men of deep faith and heroic virtue, cure the ailments of the body; but I can and must console the afflicted, and heal the wounds of their souls. It is by visiting the sick that I can best fulfill this duty, and I know how serious this obligation is. A physician would be considered guilty of criminal neglect, if he refused the assistance of his art to the human body, which, however, must soon return to the dust whence it came: far greater indeed would be the guilt of a priest who would refuse or neglect to help immortal souls, at the very moment when their eternal destiny is to be determined for ever. To him could truly be applied the awful words of the Lord to the first murderer: "Where is thy brother? . . . The voice of thy brother crieth to Me from the earth. Now therefore, cursed shalt thou be upon the earth." (Gen.

iv. 9-11.) He could not even answer like Cain: "Am I my brother's keeper?" because he knows well that he is the keeper of his brother's soul; and the soul, eternally lost through his fault, would curse him for ever.

### III

A ZEALOUS priest visits the sick members of his flock, without even waiting for a call. Thus he prepares the way for his last ministration in their behalf; thus he takes advantage of favorable opportunities to come in contact with their families, at a time when affliction especially disposes them to welcome his presence and listen to his words; thus, by his kindness and sympathy, he endears himself to the hearts of his people.

When called to the bed-side of a person in danger of death, he answers at once, being aware that even a short delay might endanger the eternal salvation of a soul redeemed by the Blood of Christ.—At all times, but especially in the case of an obdurate sinner or of a careless Catholic, he prepares his ministration by a short and fervent prayer; on the way, he asks Mary, the Refuge of sinners and the Help of Christians, to precede him and use her gentle but powerful influence to save a soul about to appear before the Supreme Judge of men: "*Ora pro nobis peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostræ.*" When death is imminent, after briefly and kindly expressing his sympathy, he at once offers his ministration, without however frightening or alarming the patient, but judiciously using all the means of persuasion in his power, until he has reached his holy purpose. If he then fails, he must have recourse to prayer and mortification before seeking a new and more favorable opportunity.

When there is no immediate danger, the priest comes gradually and tactfully to the important matter, being careful to respect the feelings of the patient and of the family. He may first ask the sick person to join with him in some short prayers and invocations, and, at the moment which he thinks suitable, he proposes Confession and Holy Communion as a source of peace, consolation, and courage in the midst of sufferings, without using he word "Viaticum" or speaking of the "Last Sacraments." It is then easier to make the patient accept, or even desire, "the other Sacrament" which contributes in restoring health to the sick, and helps them to sanctify their sufferings.

While hearing the confession of a sick person, whose mind is weakened or dulled by the condition of the body, the priest asks helpful questions, encourages him, and tries to make sure that no grievous sin of the past remains hidden through fear or shame. He takes care, when needed, that the proximate occasions of sins are removed, scandals repaired as much as possible, restitutions made, and reconciliations effected. He imposes a light penance, and ends with a brief, heartfelt, and practical exhortation to sincere contrition and entire resignation to God's holy will.

When about to give Holy Communion or administer Extreme-Unction, he sees to it that all the objects required are decently prepared. He says the prayers and performs the ceremonies with such a reverence and devotion as cannot fail to impress the patient and all those present in the room.

A zealous priest does not abandon the sick, after administering the Last Sacraments, but continues his visits to comfort them in their sufferings, to help and encourage them in their supreme struggles against the last and often violent assaults of the evil one. He suggests acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition, short invocations to Our Lord and His Blessed Mother, and to St. Joseph the protector of the dying. He again gives absolution, and applies the plenary indulgence at the hour of death, if this has not already been done. When his occupations do not allow frequent visits to the sick under his care, he at least remembers them in his prayers, and recommends them to pious and charitable persons. He does not forget them, after death, especially at the altar. A visit to the afflicted family, after the funeral, is always highly appreciated, and cannot fail to promote the spiritual interests of the relatives.

During the days of sickness, a priest should carefully avoid any interference with the temporal affairs of the person under his care; but, in case of need, he should always be ready to proffer material assistance, according to his means.

Have I, to this day, been guided by these principles in ministering to the sick?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Infirmus eram, et visitastis me."*

## 56. THE PRIEST AND HOLY COMMUNION

"PASCE AGNOS MEOS"

### I

"JESUS saith to Simon Peter: Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith to him: Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him: Feed My lambs." The divine Master asks me the same question and gives me the same answer;

because I love Him, I also must feed His lambs for life eternal. Jesus Himself has provided the food: "I am the living bread, which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give, is My flesh for the life of the world." (John vi, 51-52.) My duty is clear: since I am a shepherd of souls, I must, like Jesus, lead my flock to the good pastures which He has prepared for them. All my efforts should therefore aim at bringing souls to Jesus in Holy Communion.

*Acts of adoration, love.*

## II

WHAT is the real purpose of a priest's work, if not to unite souls with Christ, here-below, that they may be united with Him for ever in heaven? "I am the vine; you the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing. If any one abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire, and he burneth." (John xv. 3-6.) Souls cannot be more truly and more closely united with Our Lord than by Holy Communion. I must therefore strive, every day and by every means in my power, to bring those entrusted to me to the divine Banquet of the Holy Eucharist. Such is Christ's will; for the command "*Hoc facite in meam commemorationem*" does not include only the Consecration, but also the Communion; Our Lord did not only change bread into His Flesh and wine into His Blood, but He did it with the express purpose of giving Himself to us as nourishment for our souls: "*Accipite et comedite . . .*

*bibite ex eo omnes.*" He said "*omnes,*" for all must eat that heavenly food, that their souls may live.

The children need it, that the germs of the Christian life, sown in their hearts by the grace of Baptism, may develop and bear fruit. The adolescents need it, as a source of light and strength, at an age when passions arise in them which can blind their minds and weaken their wills. The mature need it, to conquer in the many battles which they have to fight to preserve and increase the treasure of spiritual life in their souls; they need it also as an unfailing source of comfort and courage in the midst of hardships and trials. The aged need it, on the decline of life to cleanse their hearts from past sins, to detach themselves from the things of a world which they must soon leave, and cheer their remaining days with the hope of a better life where sufferings and sorrows shall be no more.

Bearing this in mind, Pope Pius X, in his Encyclical on Holy Communion, declares that "Frequent and daily Communion should be open to all the faithful of whatever rank and condition of life."

### III

A PRIEST, therefore, should never tire of exhorting his people, from the pulpit and in the confessional, to receive Holy Communion frequently. He should make use of sodalities, clubs, associations of all sorts, to promote this salutary practice. He should encourage the excellent custom of the First Friday Communion, and give his parishioners every facility for confession. He should consider it a duty to follow the instructions of the Encyclical, concerning the Communion of children.

But knowing that frequent Communion can bear little fruit, unless it is received in souls open to the flow of divine grace, he carefully instructs the faithful as to the dispositions required, warns them against the danger of approaching the altar rail out of habit or human respect, or in a thoughtless and perfunctory manner. He emphasizes the importance of due preparation, reverent reception, and fervent thanksgiving; he explains methods and recommends prayer-books to adults; he suggests acts and prayers to children, before and after Communion.

He makes sure that children, before being admitted to their first Holy Communion, are sufficiently instructed, and well disposed. He carefully abstains from driving them in a crowd to Holy Communion, by strict regulations, but tries to make them understand and desire its invaluable blessings. Before the day appointed for a general Communion, he exhorts the children to receive Our Lord, but insists that an act so sacred must be performed with perfect freedom and proper dispositions, thus endeavoring to protect them from sacrilegious or indifferent Communions.

To his instructions and exhortations a priest must add the powerful example of his own devotion to the Holy Eucharist, manifested by his reverent attitude in the church and at the altar, and by his fidelity to thanksgiving after Mass.

Am I free from blame as a minister of the Holy Eucharist? Did I ever show lack of zeal or prudence in bringing the faithful to Holy Communion, or in preparing them for this sacred act?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*
*"Pasce agnos meos."*

## 57. The Sacrament of Baptism

"DOCETE OMNES GENTES, BAPTIZANTES EOS . . ."

### I

Christ had no sin to wash away; yet He insisted on being baptized, to emphasize by His example the necessity of a Sacrament which He was to give us as the gate to His heavenly kingdom. Then, by His words, He made it clear that Baptism was necessary to salvation, when explaining to Nicodemus the nature of the new birth which alone would enable man to enter the kingdom of God: "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John iii, 5.) Finally, before His Ascension, He removed all doubt as to the necessity of this Sacrament, when He said to His Apostles: "Going therefore, teach ye all nations, *baptizing them* in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. xxviii. 19.) These, His last words on earth, expressed not only a desire but a clear command. It is therefore on preaching and baptizing that the Church of Christ is founded; it is from these two sources that men must first draw supernatural light and life.

*Acts of adoration, obedience, love.*

### II

The apostles understood this well, and soon went forth, instructing and baptizing Jews and Gentiles. So did their successors throughout the centuries following; in our own day, many priests leave home and country, and cross the seas to baptize the heathen and their children. Could a priest ever be so forgetful of this essential duty as to allow, through carelessness, any children of Christian parents to die before they have been regenerated by the saving water? No, a worthy priest understands that his vigilance and zeal must, at times, make up for the negligence of the parents in a matter of so vital importance.

Both in his Catechism class and from the pulpit, a priest should teach the faithful their duty in this regard, and make sure that those under his care, especially those having responsibility, are able to administer this Sacrament in a case of necessity. He should react against the tendency, on the part of some families, to defer the Baptism of their children for insufficient reasons.

He should always be ready to baptize the children brought to him, and show his willingness particularly in the case of those whose parents and relatives are indifferent in religious matters.

Knowing that divine grace, which was secured for us all at the cost of our Redeemer's blood, must be granted freely to all, he should show great delicacy with respect to the offering which is customary in some Catholic countries, but nowhere obligatory; he should be especially considerate when dealing with the poor, or with indifferent Catholics, for fear of wounding the former and estranging the latter.

When administering the Sacrament of Baptism, a priest should bear in mind that, while the subject, usually an infant, is unaware of the wonderful effects which divine grace produces in the soul, those who are present with him are not indifferent to the ceremonies performed and the attitude of the minister. As the impression which they carry away, on that occasion, may exert an influence on their lives as Christians, it is therefore important that it should be entirely favorable.

When explaining the nature and effects of Baptism to the faithful, he should not neglect to tell them that the Church wants her adopted children to bear the names of Saints, that they may have special protectors in heaven and models to imitate. He should therefore warn them against the contrary practice, which is not unfrequently adopted even by good Catholic parents unconsciously influenced by a non-Catholic environment.

The Baptism of adults must be prepared by a sound and thorough instruction. When circumstances permit, it can be administered with impressive solemnity, for the spiritual benefit of those who receive it and of those who witness the ceremony.

The act by which the Blessed Trinity has taken possession of a human soul should, without delay, be entered in the Parish Register; for this is of still greater importance than the entries of temporal affairs, which good business men never neglect.

The renewal of the ‘‘Baptismal Promises,’’ on the occasion of a First Communion, is a ceremony which cannot fail to impress the minds and hearts of children, at an age when they can understand their meaning and make them freely in their own names. This ceremony bears excellent fruit with adults also, especially when it is performed by the whole congregation, on some special Feast or Sunday, for instance, on the First Sunday after Easter. Where this is not customary, a priest can at least recommend the practice of privately renewing the ‘‘Baptismal Promises,’’ on the occasion of the birthday.

Am I conscious of any negligence on my part, as a minister of the Sacrament of Baptism?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

*"Docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos . . ."*

## 58. THE PARISH

"QUOS DEDISTI MIHI CUSTODIVI, ET NEMO EX EIS PERIIT"

*(John xvii. 12)*

### I

TRULY could our Blessed Savior say, at the end of His mortal life: "Those whom Thou gavest Me have I kept; and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition." He had prayed and labored for them; by word and example He had showed them the way to eternal happiness; He had given them the heavenly Bread which was to preserve and increase the life of their souls, and He was about to suffer and shed His Blood, to the last drop, for the remission of their sins. He could therefore, in all truth, say to His Father: "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." (John xvii. 4.)

*Acts of adoration, love.*

### II

IT IS now for me to continue that sacred work in behalf of those who have been entrusted to my care by my ecclesiastical superiors. The field in which I must labor is the parish to which I have been appointed by my Bishop. What am I expected to do, that, at the end of my life, I may feel entitled to say, like the divine Master: "Those whom Thou gavest me have I kept; and none of them is lost"?

A priest filled with the spirit of Christ accepts, as coming from God Himself, the mission entrusted to him by his Bishop, without any consideration of honors or temporal advantages; he knows that the larger is his flock, the greater also is his responsibility. He comes, not as a mercenary, but as a good shepherd anxious to convince his parishioners, from the very beginning, that he is entirely devoted to their spiritual interests, and does not intend to seek from them any material profit: *"Non veni ministrari, sed ministrare."* If he is aware of certain defects or mistakes which may have weakened his influence and endangered the success of his work, in previous appointments, he endeavors to correct or avoid them, in his new field of labor.

On entering upon his functions, he observes, listens, and inquires, and carefully abstains from hasty judgments and conclusions; for he understands that the better he knows his parish, the wiser and more efficient direction he will be able to give his parishioners: "The good shepherd knows his sheep." If he were not well acquainted with the dispositions and ways of his people, he might speak to them a language which they would not understand, he might be, in their regard, either too exacting or too easily satisfied.

Being aware that his parish which, in most cases, existed before his arrival, shall continue after he has gone, he shows due consideration to both his predecessors and his successors. While he deems it his duty not only to keep up, but also to advance the good work done by others, and, if necessary, to make up for their negligence and correct their mistakes, he refrains from personal criticism of their deeds and methods; for he feels that such attitude would be unbecoming in itself, and, besides, would hurt his own influence with the majority of his parishioners. On the other hand, he is slow in deciding upon important and permanent changes to which his successors could not adapt themselves, and for which he himself would perhaps have to repent.

When abuses have crept into the administration of the parish, or into the lives and conduct of his parishioners, he acts with caution and without haste. He waits until he has had sufficient time to study the situation, to consult other priests who have had to deal with the same difficulties, and to acquire such influence with his flock as will prepare them to accept the needed reform without complaint or murmur.

A priest must indeed exercise the authority with which he has been invested, but not after the manner of temporal rulers and officials. He is dealing with souls whom God has created free, and by whom He wants to be obeyed and served freely. A priest, therefore, should not use the strong-handed method to enforce the Commandments of God and of His Church, and to impose religious practices upon his people. Our Lord Himself warned His Apostles against such abuse of authority: *"Reges gentium dominantur eorum. . . . Vos autem non sic"*; and St. Bernard did but reecho these words of our Blessed Savior, when he wrote to Pope Eugenius III: "You occupy the first rank, but it is only to foresee, to see, to help, and to serve. . . . Do this, and do not affect, being a man, to lord it over men." A priest should remember this warning, especially in an age when men are so jealous of their freedom. His duty is not to force them, but to enlighten, persuade, encourage, and, at times, judiciously and charitably rebuke them.

## III

A ZEALOUS priest, like the Good Shepherd, faithfully feeds and watches the sheep of his flock. He willingly gives them his time, work, and care, in the pulpit and the confessional, in his home, at the bedside of the sick, in the Sunday-School, and in the various organizations for the preservation and direction of the young and the spiritual welfare of all. He spends himself for them generously, so as to be able to say with Our Lord: "I have made known Thy name to them, and will make it known" (John xvii. 26). "Thine they were, and to me Thou gavest them, and they have kept Thy word." (John xvii. 6.)

To encourage regular attendance at church, as well as to arouse, maintain, and increase devotion in the members of his congregation, he makes an intelligent use of the influence which liturgical ceremonies and church music can exercise over their emotions; for God wants us to worship and serve Him with all the powers He has given us, that is, not only with our intellect and will, but also with our feelings. A priest, therefore, who understands the important part played in man's life by his emotional faculties, does not neglect to add the power of the liturgy and of truly religious music to the motives of faith and the sense of obedience which draw Catholics to church services. He tries to make these attractive by the care he gives to the neatness of the temple and the decoration of the altar, to the dignity and beauty of the ceremonies, and the proper training of his choir.—He selects his sexton and altar-boys with wise discernment as to aptitude and character, watches over their behavior in church, and is not indifferent to their general conduct outside.

To convert sinners, awaken a dormant faith in the indifferent, and supply a new impetus to the religious life of all, he offers the opportunity and grace of a mission or a retreat to his parishioners, from time to time. Not only does he try to secure efficient missionaries, but he also prepares their work by frequent announcements and earnest exhortations, helps them without interfering with their plans and methods, and devises means to preserve the fruits of this holy time in the souls of his people.

He always prepares and distinctly reads his announcements; these ordinarily should concern the spiritual life of his parishioners more than purely temporal matters.—He writes a clear record of the customs and events of his parish, for his own convenience and for the benefit of his successors. His financial accounts are accurately kept and regularly submitted to the diocesan authorities, as are also his parish registers.

In money matters, while endeavoring to obtain sufficient support and help for the church, the clergy, the school, and the parish activities, he exercises such moderation and tact as to make it clear to all that, with him, money is only a means to an end, and that the only end he has in view is the spiritual welfare of his people.

Finally, knowing well that his work is essentially supernatural, and that all his efforts shall be vain unless they are made fruitful by divine grace, he prays, every day, for his parishioners in general, and in particular for this or that part of his flock, for these or those individual persons who require special assistance, according to circumstances: "*Ego pro eis rogo*"—"*Pater sancte, serva eos in nomine tuo*"—

"*Sanctifica eos in veritate.*" (John xvii. 17.)

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Quos dedisti mihi custodivi, et nemo ex eis periit.*"

## 59. SOCIAL INFLUENCE

### "TRANSIIT BENEFACIENDO"

### I

OUR Lord passed through this world, doing good not only to men's souls but also to their bodies: He cured their physical ailments, and even condescended, when necessary, to feed the multitudes who followed Him. The apostles inherited and transmitted to their disciples the Master's tender compassion for physical sufferings and wants. When reading the Sacred Writings, we see the apostles collecting alms and appointing seven deacons to attend to the needs of the poor, the widows, and the orphans. We know that the early Christian Communities put their temporal possessions in common, thus practising a form of communism which the spirit of the Gospel alone can make possible. Such were the first social activities inspired by the teaching and example of Christ, and later on developed within the Church in many various forms.

### II

THE priest of to-day cannot remain indifferent to the social problems which are, at present, more complex and more urgent than they ever were before. "The social question," says Pius XI, "and the controversies connected with it as to the nature of labor, the number and length of the working days, the salaries and the strikes, are not purely economical, and should not consequently be settled regardless of Church influence; for the social question is above all a moral and religious question, and should therefore be solved chiefly according to the laws of ethics and the judgment of religion.'' Hence the priest of to-day, after the example of Our Lord and of His Church, while feeding the soul, should not neglect the needs of the body.

While he rightly insists on the sanctification of the Lord's Day, does he try to make this possible for the many workmen and employees whom the present social conditions deprive of their freedom and rest on Sunday?

While he rightly tells the parents that their duty is to give children to the Church and citizens to the Country, and to provide for their wants and education according to their station in life, does he contribute his share of effort and influence in providing the means which will enable them to discharge this important obligation?

While he rightly proclaims and explains the laws of moral conduct, does he help his people to observe them, by waging war against the evil forces of immoral literature and of alcoholism, against the corrupting influence of certain environments in which many have to dwell or work?

Let him remember the words of St. James to the Christians of his time: ''If a brother or a sister be without garments, and want daily food: and one of you say to them: Go in peace, be you warmed and filled; yet give them not those things that are necessary for the body, what shall it profit?'' (James ii. 15-17.) This same question can appropriately be asked of every priest in our own day; for it is not enough for him to teach his people their duties; he must also try to know whether the circumstances under which they live are favorable or opposed to the fulfilment of their obligations, and must endeavor to better them if he can.

## III

But is there any room left for a priest's zeal in the field of social reforms and adjustments? Is his advice or influence wanted by the laity? Will he not compromise the success of his spiritual ministry by meddling with temporal affairs? There are persons of all classes and of various opinions among those in whose behalf he must exercise his sacred functions: in the conflict of material interests, how can he side with the one without antagonizing and alienating the other? His situation is indeed very delicate and admits of only one safe method, the method of the Gospel pointed out in the parable of the seed which, sown by the husbandman, gradually develops and bears fruit, and also in the parable of the leaven which, mixed with the dough, raises it by progressive fermentation. The Church has never favored social upheavals; Our Lord and His Apostles neither preached nor encouraged the spirit of insubordination and revolt among the lower classes; they were satisfied with spreading everywhere the beautiful idea of the universal brotherhood of men, as a seed of concord and love; an idea which the Church put into practice in her worship, by making the servant and the master kneel side by side before the altar, as being the children of the same heavenly Father. Thus, without stirring up revolutions, Christ and His disciples introduced the principle of a wonderful social transformation which all men of good faith must ascribe to the influence of Christianity. In like manner, it is especially by showing himself a man of God and a true disciple of Christ, by preaching and exemplifying justice and charity, as his Master did, that a priest can safely and efficiently cooperate with civil authorities and lay organizations in curing the social evils of our times; for, just as human selfishness is the principal source of all social evils, so are divine justice and charity their only true remedies.

When dealing with the rich a priest should, without affectation but with genuine simplicity, maintain his dignity and preserve his independence, allowing himself neither to be fascinated by their wealth and luxury nor influenced by their gifts. On the other hand, he should respect their rights, and give them ungrudgingly the consideration to which they think themselves entitled.

With the humbler classes, his action is easier and usually welcome; for he is often the only one who fully understands their difficulties and knows their real needs, the only one who can truly comfort them by his sympathy and kindness, discreetly help them with his money, and especially support them with his influence.

He can encourage and direct the initiative of private or organized charities; he can take an interest in all the works of assistance founded on Christian principles, such as hospitals for the sick, orphan asylums, homes for the aged, shelters for the homeless. He can better the conditions of unfortunate individuals and families, with their personal cooperation, by encouraging, directing, and helping their endeavors to become self-supporting.

He can organize or favor general or professional societies of mutual assistance, various associations which facilitate cordial relations and good understanding between employers and employees, which bring the wealthy and the working classes into frequent and friendly contact.—He can study the social problems and conditions of the day, especially those which prevail in his immediate surroundings, always showing willingness to help when requested, and watching for every opportunity to do so with prudence and discretion.

What is now my attitude with respect to the temporal needs and interests of my parishioners? What have I done for them in this regard? What can I do?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayers.*

*"Transiit benefaciendo."*

## 60. The Apostleship of the Press

"APOSTOLUS DOCTOR GENTIUM" (I Tim. ii. 7)

### I

When Our Lord commanded His Apostles and their successors to go forth and teach all nations, He did not specify what methods they should use to spread the good tidings of the Gospel; for He knew that those would necessarily differ according to times, countries, and circumstances, and consequently, He left the choice of them to their zeal and discretion. The spoken word was for many centuries, and still remains, the principal means of expressing thought and imparting knowledge. Yet, some among the Apostles, St. Paul in particular, made use of the written word also, to instruct and exhort their converts; had the art of printing been known in his day, so zealous and so enterprising a man as the Apostle of the Gentiles would undoubtedly have taken advantage of it, as also of some other modern inventions.

## II

IN OUR age, the printed word has assumed so great an importance and exerts so wide an influence over the masses, for good or for evil, that the official teachers of Christ's doctrine cannot ignore its power and leave it entirely in the hands of those who use it to undermine the faith of Christians and corrupt the morals of men. The apostleship of the Press has therefore become a necessity which all priests should acknowledge. Many are those, Catholics or non-Catholics, who never or seldom hear the word of God. Yet they have immortal souls in which the divine seed could spring up and grow, if they received it. The priest, whose mission it is to teach all men, cannot remain indifferent to their salvation; if he has no opportunities to teach them by word of mouth, he can reach them through the Press in its various forms, Parish Bulletin, reviews, newspapers, pamphlets and books.

A priest who has a Parish Bulletin at his disposal can, without leaving his room, send forth, every month, a faithful messenger which will easily enter every home, to instruct, exhort, and comfort his people. The Parish Bulletin is the priest's loud speaker; it carries his voice to all those who cannot or will not hear it in the church. It can enlighten the ignorant and revive the embers of faith which still burn under the fire of passions and the ashes of temporal preoccupations; it arouses an interest in the events and life of the parish, and serves as a bond between the priest and the souls entrusted to his care. The excellent results of the Parish Bulletin, wherever it has been tried, amply compensate the labor which it costs. But, to insure its success, a priest should remember that his Bulletin is the messenger of God's word, and should therefore be used neither to vent his personal feelings, nor to spread his own opinions in secular matters, nor to stir up dissensions in his flock, but only to spread the light of the Gospel, and impart to all the blessings of faith and religious practice.

No one can ignore the fact that, in our day, newspapers and magazines supply their daily food to millions of minds, a food which is but too often mixed with the poison of dangerous doctrine and especially of scandals suggestive of evil; the sensational newspaper or magazine is undoubtedly responsible for many sins and many crimes. Is it enough for a priest to condemn and deplore the frequent and shocking abuse of the freedom of the press? Indeed no, but he must seize every opportunity to denounce it publicly, and warn the faithful against its dangers. He must exhort them to patronize only the most respectable papers, and make the parents understand their duty of vigilance towards their children in matters of reading. He must try to spread Catholic papers and reviews among the people of his parish, and encourage, in every possible way, the truly moral and patriotic press. If gifted and practised in the art of writing, he should, at least occasionally, contribute with his pen to the work and success of Catholic papers and periodicals, with the approval and under the supervision of his ecclesiastical superiors.

Our people, nowadays, read not only daily newspapers and periodicals, but also a large number of books and pamphlets. Books, like friends, greatly contribute in shaping the minds and characters of their readers, especially of the young; it is therefore important that a priest should advise and help his parishioners in choosing suitable books for themselves and for their children. To do this efficiently he must first, directly or indirectly, acquaint himself with the best products of modern literature, religious or secular. It would not be sufficient for him to warn his people against evil or dangerous books; for they must or will read, and should therefore receive not only negative, but also positive information and direction as to what sort of books they can use with safety, interest, and profit. It is not possible for a priest, who has many other duties, to examine personally many of the good, or even of the best books which are published every year; but he can gather sufficient information on the subject from his fellow-priests, from reliable book reviews, catalogues of public libraries, and other sources, and use it for the benefit of his parishioners. A parish, school, or club library is of great help, wherever it can be established.

A zealous priest, who understands the influence of the printed word, avails himself of every opportunity to recommend or lend good books to those under his care, taking into account the age, condition, and needs of each. He must try to spread Catholic papers and reviews among the people of his parish; at regular intervals, or at least occasionally, he should recommend, even from the pulpit, specific Catholic books for various classes of his parishioners, and encourage in every way the truly moral and patriotic press. He is anxious to spread the best pamphlets on religious or social topics of interest and importance, among Catholics and non-Catholics. If he has time, and talent as a writer, he does not hesitate to contribute his share to either religious or secular literature, in the branches of which he may have made a special study; for he knows that in so doing he obeys the command of his divine Master: "Go ye and teach all nations."

Do I fully understand my duty in this regard? What have I done to this day, and what can I do, now and in the future, to practise the apostleship of the press?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*
*"Apostolus doctor gentium."*

## 61. THE PRIEST AND EDUCATION

### I—*The Great Purpose and Essential Qualities of an Educator*

"DOCENTES EOS SERVARE OMNIA QUÆCUMQUE MANDAVI VOBIS" *(Matt. xxviii. 20)*

I

"AND the Child grew, and waxed strong, full of wisdom: and the grace of God was in Him." (Luke ii. 40.) "After three days they found Him in the temple sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His wisdom and His answers. . . . And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth: and was subject to them. . . . And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age, and grace with God and men." (Luke ii. 46-52.) Thus the Evangelist sums up in a few words the process of physical, mental, moral, and religious education to which the divine Child deigned to submit for our sake. How sublime was the office, how unique the privilege of Mary and Joseph to whom was entrusted the care of educating the Son of God made man! How great also is the function of a priest whose duty it is to engrave the image of Christ on the souls of the young! May I share in the wisdom and self-devotion of Mary and Joseph in fulfilling this important obligation!

### II

To CULTIVATE, exercise, develop, strengthen, and polish the physical, intellectual, moral, and religious faculties of the child; thus to train a man, and prepare him to become an efficient member of human society; thus also to train a Christian, and prepare him for life eternal by raising his present life to a higher level: such is the duty of those who devote their lives to the education of the young, a duty which is the continuation of God's greatest work, the creation of human souls and bodies. The educator receives the material which God's creative act entrusts to him, and he must endeavor to shape it, to impress upon it that beauty, power, and holiness which was man's natural privilege, but which sin disfigured and impaired: "*Filioli quos iterum parturio donec formetur Christus in vobis.*" Can there be in the world a more important and more noble work?

### III

THE difficulty of such a task is measured by its very greatness, and requires sound qualities in those who undertake it.

Apostolic zeal and entire self-devotion are the first essential conditions of success in matters of education. These imply, in the educator, a well defined purpose in harmony with the spirit of his vocation and the nature of the work assigned to him, and a firm determination to devote all his time and energy, to direct all his efforts towards that object, without unnecessarily or unduly dividing his attention, interest, and power between this clear duty and other occupations which, although good in themselves, have not been committed to his care and responsibility.

To develop the minds of his pupils, he must not only have a competent knowledge of the branches which he teaches, but also methods well adapted to the mental ability of the students and to the special end which they have in view.

To form their characters and teach them the practice of Christian virtues, he must be filled with the spirit of self-sacrifice and self-denial which is the necessary foundation of all natural and supernatural virtues. His example to his pupils and his merits before God will accomplish more, in his endeavor to train men and Christians, than the best instructions and exhortations; the latter prepare the way, but cannot, without the former, obtain real and lasting results.

Prudence, sound judgment, patience, and self-control will enable him to exercise a constant and beneficial influence over the minds, hearts, and wills of his pupils, in the many details of his functions as a teacher and an educator.

A priest who devotes his life to the great work of education would be deficient in one of the essential requirements of his office, if he were not possessed of a truly religious mind and a firm conviction in the efficacy of prayer for the success of his work. Unless he remembers his charges before God, he will sow the seed in vain; it will neither spring up nor develop properly; his general or individual exhortations to study, discipline, piety, and virtue will have but little effect, if he does not ask the Lord to bless his efforts and make them fruitful. He may develop the mind, he may temporarily restrain the heart and force the will, but he will not train conscientious men and faithful Christians, unless he teaches his pupils the necessity and the love of prayer, by example as well as by words; for, without the deep and salutary influence of religion, education must necessarily remain incomplete, shallow, and false.

Do I clearly realize the greatness and importance of the work in which I am engaged? Do I earnestly try to fit myself for it?

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

"*Et pro eis ego sanctifico meipsum, ut sint et ipsi sanctificati in veritate*" (John xvii. 19).

## 62. THE PRIEST AND EDUCATION

### II—*Training the Character*

"DECLINA A MALO, ET FAC BONUM" *(Ps. 36)*

### I

OUR Lord not only taught His Apostles His heavenly doctrine, but also devoted Himself to the training of their hearts and wills; for they were to be not only "the light of the world," but also "the salt of the earth." Being constantly with them, knowing their defects and shortcomings, He kindly, yet firmly, rebuked them for their lack of faith, their pride, their earthly views, their impatience, and their presumption. Before leaving them, on the night of His agony, He gave them this precious rule of conduct, to protect them against the natural weakness of their character: "Watch ye, and pray that you enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Mark xiv. 38.) The Church of Christ has continued the care and vigilance of her divine Founder in behalf of His disciples, especially in behalf of the younger members of her flock, and her zealous ministers have always taught Catholic parents to watch over their children. Where shall I seek inspiration and direction to perform successfully the difficult and delicate task of training the characters of the young, if not in the teaching and example of Christ and of His Church?

## II

THE training of the character is not possible without discipline, and discipline implies such restraint as will gradually build up control of natural impulses and inclinations, in conformity with the laws and principles of moral conduct. That restraint can be imposed from without or spontaneously arise from within, that is, it can be external or internal. Which of the two will bring about the results intended by the educator?

If purely external restraint can make the pupils do what is right, it will not help them to develop power of self-control, because, in this manner, the will is not exercising its own inward activity, but is being acted upon and led by the will of another person; it is only passive and submissive and, consequently, cannot develop according to its nature which God has made active and free. The system of external discipline with its adequate sanctions, generally known as the *repressive* method, is at times necessary and, within certain limits, can produce some good results, especially among the grown up subjects; but, in most cases, with children and adolescents, it is doomed to failure; for, as soon as the pupils are able to throw off the yoke of external restraint, nothing is left in their souls to direct the course of their lives. It is therefore mostly such restraint as originates from the pupil's will under the influence of his teachers, that can give real and lasting results.

Does this mean that when boys or girls have frequently and clearly been told what they are expected to do or to avoid, when natural and supernatural motives of right conduct have been thoroughly explained to them, they should be left entirely to their honor and conscience, and should depend on their own resources of will power and spirit of faith to act in conformity with rules and regulations? This might be the ideal; but would not this be expecting as much from children and adolescents, in spite of their weakness and inexperience, as from characters already shaped and strengthened by education? Would not this be ignoring not only the "*Vigilate*" of the Gospel, the directions of the Church, the teaching of her great spiritual writers, and the practice of her best educators, but also the nature of the young with their love of independence, with their inclination to avoid effort and seek self-gratification?

Will the fear of severe sanctions be a sufficient check to natural impulses and tendencies? Not ordinarily; for our boys and girls, nowadays, are only too willing to "take a chance," even in such important matters as studies and discipline; and, supposing punishment were a sufficient check to rule infraction, we know that fear alone is only the *beginning* of wisdom *"Initium sapientiæ timor Domini,"* and is therefore unable, by itself, to develop the sense of duty and responsibility.

## III

One of the greatest educators of our age, Blessed Don Bosco, taught and successfully applied the method of discipline called *preventive,* which wisely combines external vigilance on the part of the teachers with proper exercise of free-will on the part of the students, in accordance with the great tradition of Christian pedagogy.

The art of the educator, he says, consists in preventing the young from doing evil and in helping them to do good: *"Declina a malo, et fac bonum."* He must constantly be among his pupils, not as a Superior or a Prefect who is determined to force their will, but as a father who is anxious to protect and assist his children, until they are sufficiently practised in the right use of their freedom. This method aims at draining the source of evil by either suppressing or neutralizing the occasions. It seems to be in conformity with the progress of modern science which places more confidence in hygiene than in remedies, and prefers preventing diseases to curing them. In matters of education also, it cannot be denied that *"One ounce of prevention is more efficacious than one pound of coercion or sanction"* (St. Francis of Sales).

But does this system of discipline allow the pupils enough opportunities to exercise their will freely, and thus develop a sense of responsibility? Yes, since vigilance, although incessant, is not ordinarily intended to be coercive, burdensome, or annoying to them. During recreations, for instance, the presence of a teacher sharing in the games of his pupils, or watching them with interest, is, in most cases, sufficient to remove many occasions of wrong-doing to which their yet untrained wills would probably yield, and would thereby be weakened; the presence of one in authority also encourages the students to resist many minor temptations, and thus strengthens their will by helping them to use it rightly.

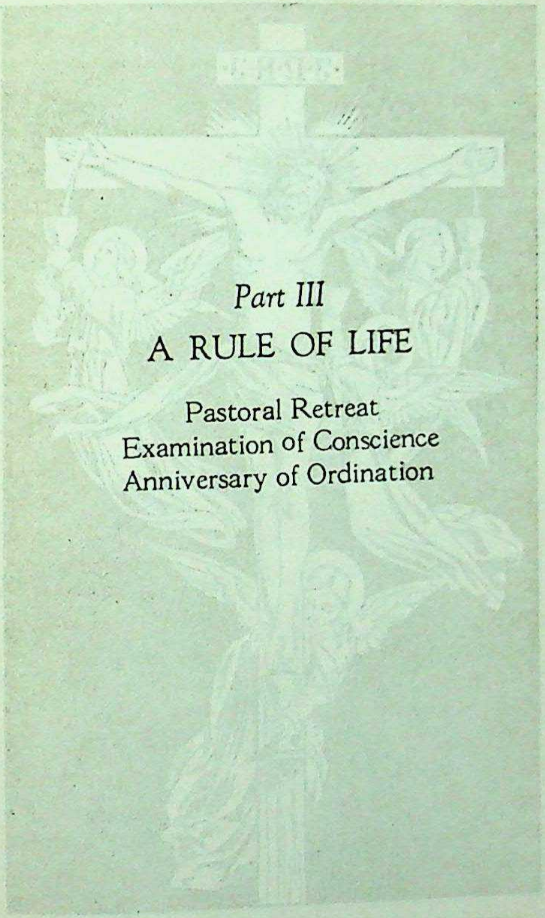
It must however be admitted that even the best methods of discipline will never be able to ward off all faults and transgressions of precepts and rules. Punishment will therefore become necessary, at times; for, when nature wanders away from the path of duty, it must be brought back to it even by the use of strong means. But, to be efficient, punishment should not be too easily inflicted; it should be delayed as long as possible. Kindly warning should first be tried; if warning is inefficient, then rebuke should follow; if rebuke fails, then punishment cannot be avoided. But punishment should not usually and unnecessarily be humiliating, and should never be irritating; it will be well also to mention the motives which render it necessary. Not unfrequently, a serious and saddened countenance, a few cold or indifferent words, an averted glance will sufficiently punish the guilty ones, especially when the teacher's devotion and kindness has won for him the affection of his pupils. The teacher's authority, says Don Bosco, must spring from love; it must be the authority of a father who holds in his hands the hearts of his children. His pupils will love him, if they feel that they are loved by him. Hence there should be, on his part, no distant attitude, no anger, no public humiliation which is not fully justified; but, on the contrary, a family spirit, kindness manifested by kind deeds, mercy which easily forgives and forgets, constant care which makes the teacher take a real interest in his pupils' health, needs, troubles, progress, and joy; vigilance which neither hinders nor annoys, but protects and helps; meekness which can smile even in the midst of difficulties and trials, justice towards all, firmness against wrong-doers, and confidence seeking opportunities to manifest itself and infallibly attracting confidence.

Every order given should be based on such motives as can impress its necessity or usefulness on the minds of the pupils, so that they may obey it, not constrained by force, but freely and even gladly, because they understand that it is meant for their own good.

Finally, joy itself plays an important part in the education of the young. Joyful recreations bring the pupils contentment and rest, and prepare them for fruitful work. The cordial atmosphere of the classroom, as long as it does not interfere with good order, contributes greatly in inspiring the students with a love for their studies. Beautiful ceremonies and church music give them a taste for the things of God. The cheerful countenances and ways of their teachers and of the most exemplary students make them realize that virtue and duty conceal real charm and pleasure, that religion does not preach sadness, but blesses and encourages every sort of pure and innocent joy, and that joy, like love, is a gift of God.

*Examination of conscience—Resolutions—Prayer.*

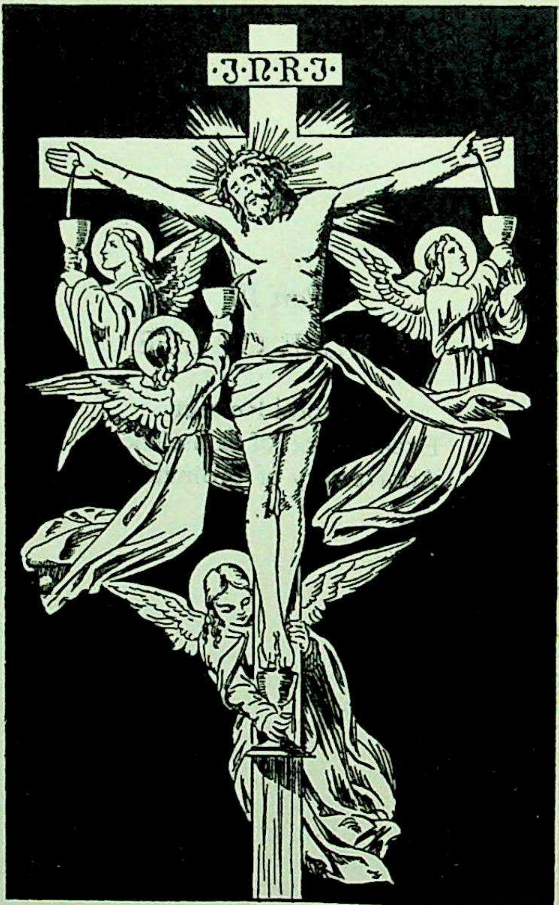
*"Declina a malo, et fac bonum."*



## *Part III*

# A RULE OF LIFE

### Pastoral Retreat
### Examination of Conscience
### Anniversary of Ordination



"Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and cleanse to Himself a people acceptable, a pursuer of good works" (*Titus ii, 14*).

# A RULE OF LIFE

## PURPOSE

1—To keep my will in constant conformity with the divine will.

2—To avoid waste of time, by a careful distribution of my work and spiritual exercises.

3—As a source of strength and courage against the weakness and hesitations of my nature, and as a faithful reminder of duty.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1—In all my actions, I must bear in mind the end of my Priesthood and of the special work which has been assigned to me.

2—I must intelligently and steadily oppose the various causes, internal and external, which could prevent me from reaching that end, and use my private rule as the most efficient means to that effect.

3—I must aim at doing every thing through love, nothing through fear: *"Diligentibus Deum omnia cooperantur in bonum."*

4—I should not order or advise others to do any thing which I would not be willing to do under similar circumstances: *"Cœpit facere et docere."*

5—I must be ready to follow the spirit rather than the letter of my private rule, whenever the interests of my work require it.

# DUTIES TO GOD

## Spiritual Exercises

### DISPOSITIONS

1—I must highly value my spiritual exercises; for they are a daily tribute of my mind, heart, and will to the Lord, and the daily food which preserves and increases the life of my soul.

2—I must perform them faithfully, delay them as little as possible, and never omit them, except for serious reasons; I should rather shorten them, when necessary, than omit them entirely.

3—All my intentions in prayer should be directed to the great end of my Priesthood, the glory of God and the salvation of souls. I should prepare a list of intentions, some for every day of the week, for my own spiritual needs, and for the spiritual welfare of others, to which I will add the special intentions suggested by circumstances and the inspiration of divine grace.

## Meditation

*Why should I meditate?*

1—Because, having been called to continue the work of Christ and to live as an "*alter Christus,*" I must follow the example of the divine Master.

2—Because all holy priests have practised meditation in some form or other.

3—Because meditation will help me to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, to administer the Sacraments, to read the Divine Office, and say all my daily prayers with recollection and fervor.

4—Because my supply of spiritual thoughts and holy dispositions, from which I must constantly draw for the benefit of others, will soon be exhausted unless I renew it, every day, through meditation.

5—Because I know that I derived much profit from meditation, during the years I spent in the Seminary.

*What is Meditation to me?*

1—A daily audience with God Almighty, in which I can speak to Him heart to heart and face to face, and, in the light of His presence, learn to know and love Him better, see myself as I am, and understand God's will in my regard.

2—A light which will guide me in all my actions during the day.

3—A power which will set all my faculties in motion for God and souls.

4—An abundant source from which I shall be able to draw inspiration and grace for the pulpit, the confessional, and other functions of my ministry.

*How shall I make my Meditation?*

1—To avoid hesitation about the choice of subjects for meditation, I will select a suitable book and follow it from beginning to end, interrupting the series of these meditations whenever I feel inclined to some particular subject, and then returning to it.

2—I will read, after night prayers, the points of the meditation for the next day.

3—I will make my meditation for half an hour, if possible, or at least for ten or fifteen minutes, every day, immediately after morning prayers; if circumstances do not allow it at that time, I will always try to perform this exercise before breakfast.

4—From among the various methods in use I will adopt such as is more particularly appealing to me, taking care however that, besides the consideration of the subject, it always include an examination of conscience, prayer, and practical resolutions for the day.

5—I will try to remember and renew my morning resolutions, at least once during the day, at a determined time, v. g. in the course of my visit to the Blessed Sacrament.

## THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

THIS is the most sacred function of my priestly office: the most important and most precious moment of the day, when I can best give glory to God and draw from the inexhaustible treasure of Christ's merits the graces I need for myself and for the souls entrusted to me; the divine Sun which enlightens the day of a priest and of a Christian.

I will therefore consider it a great privilege to be allowed to say Mass, every day, and, even when I am not strictly bound to offer the Holy Sacrifice, I will not deprive myself of such a blessing without serious reasons.

*Preparation.*—A. *Remote.*

1.—I will make the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass the centre of my life, by referring to it all my prayers and principal actions, as a preparation and a thanksgiving.

2.—I will remember that, in order to be a worthy minister of Christ at the altar, I must be, as He was, a victim as well as a priest.

3.—I will never go up to the altar without having first purified my soul from sin, either by confession, if necessary and possible, or at least by a sincere act of contrition.

4.—I will faithfully acquit, as a duty of justice, all the Mass intentions received.

B. *Immediate.*

1.—I will say Mass punctually at the appointed time, even on week days, for the convenience of those who wish to be present.

2.—I will avoid distracting occupations before the Holy Sacrifice.

3.—I will spend a few minutes in prayer and recollection, at the foot of the altar, before vesting.

4.—I will form or remember my special intentions for the day.

5.—I will keep silence in the sacristy; while vesting I will recite the prayers prescribed.

*Celebration.*

1.—*Modest* and *dignified* in attitude, gaze, and motions.

2.—*Liturgical:* accurate performance of all the ceremonies, distinct and respectful reading of the text. Neither slow nor hurried.

3.—*Pious*—knowing that I am standing in the sight of the Blessed Trinity, the saints and the angels, the souls in Purgatory, and the faithful; being conscious that I represent the whole Church before God as if I were the only priest on earth, that I am, in Jesus' name, the mediator between heaven and earth. I must try to apply my mind to the meaning of the ceremonies I perform and of the words I utter, and to fill my heart with sentiments of faith and love, especially after the Consecration.

4.—At the time of Holy Communion, I will think that Our Lord comes to me in order to continue His life on earth within me and through me.

*Thanksgiving.*

Immediately after Mass, for fifteen minutes; I may be obliged to shorten it, at times, but I will not omit it entirely.

During that precious time, I will draw Jesus' life into my soul, abandon myself to Him entirely to be transformed into Him, make acts of faith, adoration, love, gratitude, petition, offering of myself and all my actions. I will speak to Jesus of what I intend to do for Him during the day, and ask His blessing.

I will continue my thanksgiving in the most efficient manner, during the day, by endeavoring to make Jesus live in me: *"Vivo, jam non ego, vivit vero in me Christus."*

## THE DIVINE OFFICE

NEXT to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the administration of the Sacraments, the Divine Office is for me the most important and most priestly function of each day; for the Breviary is the prayer of Christ continued by His priest, the official prayer of the Church, which is especially entitled to be heard in heaven. The Divine Office is therefore a real power in my hands; I can often accomplish through it what I cannot do through my work. Far from being a burden to me, it ought to be a source of confidence, strength, and consolation.

I will read my Office:

1.—*Faithfully,* at regular hours, if possible: the Little Hours, at the first free moment in the morning; Vespers and Compline, at the first free moment in the afternoon; Matins and Lauds, in the evening, as a preparation for the Mass of the following day.

2.—*Liturgically,* observing the rubrics, avoiding hurry, with a reverent attitude.

3.—*Devoutly,* taking a few seconds, before beginning, to recollect myself, to unite myself in prayer with Our Lord in the Tabernacle and all those who, at the same hour, perform this holy function throughout the world, to form my intentions; trying to follow the meaning of the text, or occupying my mind with some pious thought; renewing my attention at the "Gloria Patri" after each psalm.

## VISITS TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

I AM especially bound, as a priest, to visit, during the day, Jesus Whom I brought down from heaven to earth, in the morning, Whom I placed in the Tabernacle, and Who visited me first in Holy Communion; I must be, like St. Joseph, His loving and faithful guardian.

I must visit Him, because my life is, above all, a Eucharistic life spent around the altar and the tabernacle; because, enjoying the privilege of Jesus' intimacy, I must try to make up for the ingratitude or indifference of those who forsake Him, and represent before Him those whose daily cares and occupations do not allow them to fulfill that duty of love; because I have many favors to ask of Him for my own spiritual interests and for the souls entrusted to me.

I will therefore be faithful to visit the Blessed Sacrament, for at least fifteen minutes every day, and even for an hour once a week, if I feel so inclined and if my other duties permit.

*(See prayers and suggestions for visits to the Blessed Sacrament, page 104.)*

## SELF-EXAMINATION

IN ORDER to avoid sin and advance in virtue, I must not only look into my conscience to remember my faults and confess them, but I must also acquire a thorough knowledge of my natural inclinations, that I may the more easily oppose and check those which are evil, cultivate and develop those which are good. Such is the purpose of the various forms of self-examination.

Moreover, while trying to know myself, I shall at the same time learn to know others, since human nature is the same in all; this knowledge will be a great help to me for the direction of souls.

I will practice self-examination:

During my meditation, according to the subject under consideration;

During my visit to the Blessed Sacrament, particularly on the point to which I resolved to pay special attention, in my last retreat or in my last confession;

At night prayers, on the sins I may have committed during the day.

## THE ROSARY

IT IS a most beautiful prayer, since it is composed, for the greater part, of the "Our Father" which Christ Himself taught us, and of the "Hail Mary," the first half of which was brought down from heaven to earth by the angel Gabriel. It is a most powerful prayer which has been, for several centuries, a channel of innumerable and extraordinary favors, spiritual and temporal. By means of the Rosary, pious and zealous priests have converted many sinners, especially at the hour of death; they have helped many tempted and afflicted souls in this life; they have brought relief and deliverance to many souls suffering in Purgatory.

I will say five decades of the Rosary, every day, preferably in the afternoon or in the evening; I can perform this devotion while taking some exercise in the open air. I will always pray for some particular intention, and follow the methods suggested, page 66.

### SPIRITUAL READING

THE special purpose of Spiritual Reading is to surround my soul with an atmosphere of good thoughts and sentiments which will nourish my piety, and to place before my eyes examples which will stimulate me in the practice of virtue. I should therefore consider "Spiritual Reading" as very important for my progress in the spiritual life, and have a great desire to profit by it.

1.—I shall devote at least fifteen minutes, every day, to this exercise, in the afternoon or in the evening. I shall select for this purpose such spiritual books as appeal to me, writings of the saints and masters of the spiritual life, biographies of holy priests and of lay men or women remarkable for their virtues and good works.

2.—To secure variety and efficiency, I may divide the year into four parts corresponding to the four liturgical seasons, and read:

*a)* In the Fall, books on the principles of Christian life.

*b)* In the Winter, lives of saints or holy persons of the laity.

*c)* In the Spring, books on the principles of sacerdotal life.

*d)* In the Summer, biographies of saints or holy men honored with the sacred character of the priesthood.

3.—I will read with attention, and sometimes write down, in a special note-book or on detached leaves, thoughts which have made a special impression on me; these notes may prove useful in the preparation of my sermons.

4.—I can, at times, use my spiritual reading as a subject for my meditation of the following day.

### SHORT PRAYERS

BEFORE and after meals, study, administration of the sacraments . . .

They are like so many drops of the Precious Blood which I should not waste, but carefully gather for myself and for others. They can remind me of God's presence, and obtain for me the light, courage, and supernatural intention which I need in order to perform my ordinary actions in an efficient and meritorious manner. They are to me what oil is to the lamp and wood to the fire.

I will recite them with reverence, attention, and devotion, in union with Our Lord in the Tabernacle.

### CONFESSION

I NEED the Sacrament of Penance to keep my soul in that state of greater purity required of one who lives in intimate relations with Christ and offers, on the altar, the immaculate Lamb of God. I need it also to heal more and more perfectly the wounds of my past sins, and strengthen my soul for new struggles.

I will choose as my confessor a priest of sincere piety, high character, competent knowledge, and sound judgment, whose advice I can follow with entire confidence.

I will make my confession regularly, on the appointed day if not prevented, every week or, at least, every other week.

On the day on which I am to confess my sins, I will think of my confession in my meditation and thanksgiving, and ask for the grace of performing this important action in a worthy and profitable manner. I will examine my conscience carefully, but without scruple, and try to arouse sentiments of sincere contrition in my heart.

I will make a special resolution, on the occasion of each confession, selecting one particular point as the subject of my daily examination of conscience.

I will make a short thanksgiving, and perform my penance as soon as possible.

## DEVOTIONS

DEVOTIONS are necessary to maintain and develop piety. My preference will be for the principal devotions which are either prescribed or recommended by the Church.

1.—Devotion to the Holy Eucharist (Mass, daily visits); this must be, above all others, the great devotion of a priest.

2.—Devotion to the Passion of Our Lord (Stations of the Cross).

3.—Devotion to the Sacred Heart (First Friday).

4.—Devotion to the Blessed Virgin (Month of May, Saturday, Scapular, especially the daily recitation of the Beads).

I will consider the devotion to the Blessed Virgin as next in importance to that which has for its object the sacred person of Our Lord. I will place in the Blessed Mother of Christ a filial and unbounded confidence; I will have recourse to her in all my wants, troubles, and temptations. I will frequently renew my consecration to her service.

5.—Devotion to St. Joseph, to the Apostles, to my Patron Saint and my Guardian Angel.

There are indeed other devotions which may help to promote my progress in the spiritual life; I will select and adopt those which most particularly appeal to me. However, I will not overload myself with devotional practices; I will be especially on my guard against such as have not been duly sanctioned by the Church authorities. Before joining any pious association, I will try to practice its spirit and follow its rules.

## DUTIES TO MY NEIGHBOR

### Duties to My Superiors

*In General:* Respect, obedience, confidence.

1.—*To the Sovereign Pontiff.* I will always speak of him with veneration and love. I will not only obey all his decrees in matters of faith and discipline, but even try to comply with his directions and desires in matters of lesser importance. I will pray for him and his intentions.

2.—*To my Bishop.* I will consider it a duty to speak of him with filial reverence; I will never allow myself to criticize the acts of his administration. I will promptly and generously obey his orders and decisions, and readily accept all the functions he will entrust to me; I may, however, respectfully submit to him my reasons for declining such or such appointment, while declaring myself ready to abide by his decision.

3.—*To my Pastor, or Superior.* Devoted and unselfish cooperation in our common work, whole-hearted support in difficulties, docility to his orders or directions, respectful and cordial relations. I will undertake nothing of importance, concerning the parish or the institution, without his permission. I will carefully abstain from assuming duties or responsibilities which belong to him alone, except at his own request or by order of the higher authorities. I will respect, defend, and promote his prestige and reputation, as being essential to the success of our work. I will ask his advice in my doubts and difficulties.

### Duties to My Equals

1.—I will respect their priestly character, independently of their personal worth and dispositions, in thinking of them, dealing with them, conversing with them, and speaking of them.

2.—I will entertain towards them sentiments of brotherly love which will foster friendly harmony, and will prompt me to sympathize with them in their sorrows and troubles, to share in their joys, to check all feelings of jealousy or rivalry and sincerely rejoice at the success of their work, and also, if the occasion presents itself, to give them discreetly friendly advice or admonition, which, on the other hand, I will accept from them with gratitude.

3.—I will always show myself ready to render them a service, and cooperate with them for the success of the work entrusted to us.

4.—I will try to appreciate their qualities and follow their good example, while carefully avoiding to imitate their defects and repeat their mistakes.

## Duties to Those Intrusted to Me

### IN GENERAL

1.—*Respect and Esteem*, due to souls created after God's image, redeemed by Christ's blood, destined to heaven. I will speak to them with simplicity and affability, but never with such freedom and familiarity as to allow them to forget that I am a priest. They will respect me if I respect them.

2.—*Kindness*, prompted by the spirit of sacerdotal charity, manifested by words and deeds. A priest's kindness easily wins over to him the confidence and good will of his people, and prepares the success of his ministry.

3.—*Zeal* for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, without which I would have been ordained in vain. To this noble and sacred task I will devote all my time, all the powers of my soul and body. To be fruitful, zeal in me must be:

a) *Generous*, that is, always ready for work, effort, and sacrifice.
b) *Intelligent*, preparing action by serious reflection and careful planning.
c) *Prudent*, undertaking nothing above my physical strength, mental ability, and means at my disposal.
d) *Parochial*, having for its special if not exclusive object the spiritual welfare of the souls entrusted to my care.
e) *Impersonal*, establishing or directing parochial activities in such a way that they can remain after me and easily be continued by my successors.
f) *Hierarchical*, undertaking nothing of importance without having either obtained the permission or sought the advice of my superiors.

### DUTIES TO THE SICK

To MANY the time of sickness is the "*tempus acceptabile, dies salutis*," from a spiritual point of view. The thought of eternity, the purifying influence of suffering, the need of help and consolation prepare the soul for the action of divine grace, and, in most cases, make the presence of the priest desired and welcome. I must therefore take advantage of such favorable circumstances.

I will visit the sick frequently, considering this part of my work as one of my most important duties. I will even make a friendly call before I am sent for, if prudence and discretion allow. I will often inquire about the condition of my sick parishioners from their relatives and friends.

I will answer every call without delay. On the way, I will think of what I should say and prepare my ministration by silent prayer; I will ask the Blessed Virgin and my Guardian Angel to precede me to the bedside of the sick person, especially in a difficult or doubtful case. I will not fail to exhort and encourage the patient and say a few good words to the members of the family.

I will continue my visits, if possible, after administering the last Sacraments.

I will discreetly and generously give material assistance to the poor.

After the death of a person, a visit of sympathy to the family endears the priest to his people and cannot fail to bear good fruits for their spiritual welfare.

## DUTIES TO THE YOUNG

REMEMBERING that the salvation of each individual soul, the future of the parish, of the diocese, and of the Church depend, in a large measure, on the education of the young members of the congregation, I will apply myself with zeal and love to the discharge of this essential duty, and employ all the means at my disposal to give a thorough Christian training to the minds, hearts, and wills of the children entrusted to my care, and to preserve their faith and morals.

1.—*Christian training of the mind,* by careful instruction and direction of the Catechists, by constant and tactful supervision of their work, by personal teaching of Religion well prepared, sound, attractive, clear, and practical.

2.—*Christian training of the character,* by appropriate directions and exhortations as to the forming of moral habits, natural and supernatural, by instilling into children the spirit of faith as a guide in their daily actions, and even the spirit of zeal which will prompt them to pray for the conversion of sinners, pagans, heretics, to take an active interest in the work of foreign missions and in parish activities, etc. . . . by the influence of good example, and by timely admonitions either kindly or severe according to circumstances.

3.—*Training in religious practice and piety,* by exacting regular attendance at church, on Sundays and Feasts of Obligation, and making them realize the importance of this duty; by explaining to them the meaning of our Feasts, ceremonies and liturgical prayers, of our vestments and sacred vessels; by using the power of Catholic liturgy and music to arouse their interest in Church services; by trying to make them understand the necessity, advantages, and beauty of prayer; by exhorting them to receive the Sacraments frequently.

4.—*Preservation of Faith and morals,* by warning the young against dangerous reading, spectacles, and company; by providing them with the proper kind of literature, games, and recreations; by organizing sodalities, clubs, and societies which will keep them under the influence of their priests.

## DUTIES TO ALL

1.—*In the Confessional.* The ministry of the Confessional is the least conspicuous, but undoubtedly the most fruitful of all the functions entrusted to a priest; I must therefore attend to it with assiduity, care, and zeal.

I will remember that, at the sacred tribunal of Penance, I am the representative of Christ and the dispenser of His mercy. I will see in each one of my penitents a soul which must be snatched away from the demon and brought back to Our Lord, an image of God which must be restored, as nearly as possible, to its original beauty. I shall thus find it easier to treat my penitents with respect, charity, and patience, to avoid the dangers of vanity and self-seeking, and to bear with fatigue and annoyance in the discharge of this great duty.

I will study Theology and read spiritual books to enlighten the minds of my penitents, I will pray to move and convert their hearts. I will direct them with kindness, firmness, and discernment, according to their temperaments, dispositions, and the special circumstances in which they are placed.

I will not, ordinarily, be satisfied with hearing their confession and giving them absolution without adding a few words of advice or exhortation.

I will give each penitent sufficient time to make a good confession, but will not enter into conversation on matters which can be dealt with outside the Confessional.

I will try to be neither too rigorous nor too lax in granting absolution, following in that regard the rules laid down by the best theologians and spiritual writers, and the practice of experienced confessors.

When hearing confessions, especially of women and children, I will check idle or dangerous curiosity, asking only necessary questions, and these always with prudence and discretion.

I will be punctual in hearing confessions at the appointed hours, and always show myself willing to hear at other times, especially those who do not frequently approach the tribunal of penance.

Out of respect for the seal of confession, I will avoid even indirect and vague allusions to what I have heard in the confessional.

2.—*In the Pulpit.* Preaching is the first obligation imposed by Our Lord upon His Apostles and their successors: "*Docete omnes gentes . . . Prædicate Evangelium . . .*" It lays the foundation of Faith, and consequently of Christian life: "*Fides ex auditu, auditus autem per verbum Dei.*" It is therefore worthy of all my care and attention.

In compliance with the command of the divine Master "*docete,*" I will aim above all at teaching and explaining, in a simple, clear, and forcible manner, the great truths and precepts of our holy Religion, either in the form of homilies on the Gospel, or in a regular series of well planned instructions. I will reserve exhortatory discourses and set moral sermons for solemn feasts, missions, and other special occasions.

Knowing that short talks, as are now generally expected of us, must be carefully prepared to be made efficient, I will begin early, each week, to think of my sermon for the following Sunday. I will have a definite purpose in view, select my subject accordingly, gather material, and turn it over in my mind; I will then write my sermon either entirely, especially during the first years of my ministry, or at least in its main lines, paying particular attention to the exordium and the peroration which it is often difficult to extemporize in a successful manner. While carrying on this work of preparation, I will never lose sight of the nature, dispositions, and spiritual needs of the very audience which I have to address.

My speech, clear and simple as it should be in familiar instructions, shall, however, never depart from the dignity which befits the expression of God's word, and from the correctness expected of a priest as an educated man; to these I will try to add, according to my ability, a certain elegance of style, unassuming and adapted to the intelligence of the hearers, and such oratorical devices as can help me to command their attention and arouse their interest. If I am especially gifted as a speaker, I will consider it a duty to develop my talent for the glory of God and the good of souls, by personal efforts and a careful study of the best pulpit orators.

Being convinced that the best sermons, if poorly delivered, make but little impression, I will practise vocal culture, if necessary, distinct enunciation, varied and natural inflections, and the use of proper gestures.

In speaking to the congregation I will never allow myself unfavorable allusions to individuals or classes of persons, harsh words and rebukes, or anything that might hurt the feelings of the hearers. I will keep out of my sermons all secular topics that are not closely connected with religion, or that might arouse ill feeling and discord.

Knowing that the most earnest efforts on my part would remain fruitless without the help of divine grace, I will have recourse to prayer, before preaching, and ask Our Lord to prepare the soil in which I am to sow the good seed.

3.—*In administering the Sacraments.* I will always have a high idea of my office as a minister of the Sacraments, remembering St. Paul's words: *"Sic nos existimet homo ut ministros Christi et dispensatores mysteriorum Dei."*

I will see to it that none of those entrusted to my care be deprived through negligence on my part, of any Sacrament to which he is entitled, and that nothing be omitted of what is required for the validity of the sacred rites.

I will perform the ceremonies with dignity and accuracy, and read the prayers distinctly and reverently, out of respect for the Sacraments, as well as to edify the faithful and impress upon them the saccredness and beauty of our liturgical functions.

I will, from time to time, remind the faithful of the conditions required to baptize validly in a case of necessity, and try to make them realize the importance of not delaying Baptism for their children and the last Sacraments for the sick.

I will explain to them, publicly or privately, the necessity and manner of preparing for a worthy and fruitful reception of the Sacraments, and willingly give them all the help they need in that regard.

I will carefully keep the parish records concerning baptisms, marriages, and funerals.

4.—*In divine Worship.* Great is the influence of the senses, external and internal, over the inner life of the human soul, and, consequently, great is the power of Catholic Liturgy, which appeals directly to the senses, to preserve and develop faith and devotion in the hearts of our people. I will therefore neglect nothing that can contribute to the decency and beauty of our liturgical functions, and give diligent attention to whatever is connected with them.

I will see to the cleanliness of the church, the proper decoration of the altar and sanctuary, on Sundays and Feasts, the neatness of the vestments, sacred vessels and linen.

I will patiently and carefully train boys for the service of the altar.

I will give special attention to the music, either by personal direction, if I am sufficiently gifted in that respect, or by encouragement and help to the persons in charge, and a discreet supervision of their work. I will try to impress upon them the necessity of selecting music, not secular and worldly, but truly religious, that is conducive to prayer and devotion, and of following official regulations on Church Music, as strictly as circumstances permit. I will instruct them myself, or have them instructed to that effect.

I will spare no effort to surround our solemn services with such dignity and splendor as can make them attractive and impressive to the congregation.

Before taking part in a solemn function, I will consult an approved Manual of Ceremonies.

### RELATIONS

In my relations with parishioners and other classes of people, these are, in brief, the principles of conduct which I will try to follow.

Purely social visits shall be rare and short, and always of such nature as to leave the good impression expected of a priest's presence and conversation.

*With Parishioners,* kindness and affability, without ever sacrificing priestly reserve and dignity; genuine interest in the temporal and spiritual welfare of the family, advice and encouragement in troubles and difficulties, sympathy in sorrow and suffering, judicious and generous assistance to the poor, due consideration to the rich and gratitude for their help to parish work, without any display of flattery and obsequiousness, without any motives of self-interest.

*With Non-Catholics,* harmony, courtesy, obligingness, willingness to enlighten them on Catholic Faith and practices, but no unnecessary or aggressive criticism of their religious opinions, no uncalled for challenge to private and, still less to public discussion or controversy.

*With civil authorities,* cordiality, whenever possible, willingness to cooperate with them for the welfare of the community, respect for their persons, laws, regulations, and decisions, courteous objections and appeals when deemed necessary or opportune, but no unwarranted or bitter criticism of their administration.

*With my Family.* To my parents I owe tender love, filial reverence, deep gratitude, ready and hearty assistance, if needed; such sentiments and dispositions, far from being weakened, are rather intensified by my consecration to the service of God, by my priestly training, character, and obligations. To brothers, sisters, and other relatives, I will continue my sincere affection and, according to circumstances, give advice and help in the temporal or spiritual order. But I will never allow attachment to my family to interfere with my duties as a priest.

*With the House and Church Employees,* kindness, proper reserve, appreciation of their services, regular payment of their wages. I will not allow them to meddle with the affairs of the parish, nor will I discuss these with other priests in their presence. I will require of them discretion concerning what they may hear or see in the house, and will not easily listen to reports and gossip from them. I will make sure that visitors, whether parishioners or strangers are received with courtesy, and the poor kindly treated.

*"Qui regulæ vivit, Deo vivit."*
(St. Gregory of Nyssa.)

# PASTORAL RETREAT

## I. The Opportunity

"*Venite seorsum, et requiescite pusillum*" (Mark vi. 31). Such is the kind invitation which Our Lord now addresses to me, as He once did to His Apostles. After the labor of the past year in the midst of preoccupations, hardships, material difficulties, spiritual trials, success or disappointment, comes a period of rest and calm during which I can be alone with Jesus and my own soul. I will listen to God's voice: "*Audiam quid loquatur in me Dominus Deus*" (Ps. 84-9); I will look into the depth of my soul; I will raise my mind and heart to heaven in fervent prayer; I will refresh and lift up all the powers of my soul in that bracing atmosphere where "the air is purer, God nearer, and heaven more accessible"; I will strengthen and direct my will by means of good resolutions, and try to increase my efficiency for the work entrusted to me. I will lay my soul wide open to receive the treasures of divine grace which will flow for me from the Sacred Heart of Our Lord, during these blessed days. "*Ecce nunc tempus acceptabile, ecce nunc dies salutis.*"

Shall I have another such opportunity before I am called to give an account of my life at the tribunal of the Sovereign Judge? This is God's secret. But I will try to make this retreat as fervent and profitable as if it were to be for me the last one. "*Admoneo vos ne in vacuum gratiam Dei recipiatis.*"

## II. The Means

### "INTRATE TOTI, MANETE SOLI, EXITE ALII"

I SHOULD first have a sincere desire to profit by the

Retreat, and a firm resolve to apply myself to its work with earnestness and zeal. *"Intrate toti."*

I should cut off all communications with the outside world, and therefore should abstain from visiting or receiving visits, from reading or writing letters without necessity. I should keep the silence prescribed, and banish all thoughts or preoccupations foreign to the work of the Retreat. *"Manete soli."*

I should faithfully attend the various exercises of the Retreat, and listen to the conferences not with a critical spirit, but with a sincere desire to profit by what I hear.

I should give some time, every day, to the reading of Holy Scripture, spiritual books or edifying biographies.

I should devote a good part of my free moments to prayer: visits to the Blessed Sacrament, Rosary, etc.

I should try, if need be, to correct habits of haste, careless enunciation, neglect of rubrics and dissipation of mind in reading the Divine Office and offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

I should review the time which has elapsed since my last Retreat, and try to know with what care, zeal, and intentions I have fulfilled my priestly duties; if I have failed in some of them, I should seek the reasons of my failures, and plan for the future in the light which God grants me during these days.

I should examine my own personal life with respect to piety and the practice of virtue.

Finally, I should form and write down some practical resolutions concerning my spiritual exercises, defects to correct, occasions of temptation to avoid, virtues to acquire or develop, and the duties of my office. *"Exite alii."*

### *Suggestions for Spiritual Reading during the Retreat.*

1st Day: St. Matthew, ch. v, vi, vii—Following of Christ, B. i, ch. xxv.

2nd Day: Epistle to the Romans, ch. vi, vii—Following of Christ, B. i, ch. xxi.

3rd Day: St. Luke, ch. xii, xv—Following of Christ, B. i, ch. xxiii, xxiv.

4th Day: St. Luke, ch. x—II Corinthians, ch. iv—Following of Christ, B. ii, ch. vii, viii.

5th Day: St. John, ch. xiv, xv, xvi, xvii—Following of Christ, B. iii, ch. xxvii, xxxii.

6th Day: Epistle of St. John—Following of Christ, B. iii, ch. xxxvi, xxxviii.

7th Day: II Ep. to Timothy, Ep. to Titus—Following of Christ, B. iv, ch. i, ii.

—St. Francis of Sales: Introduction to a Devout Life—Spirit—Letters.

—Scupoli: Spiritual Combat.

—St. Ignatius: Spiritual Exercises.

—Hedley: Retreat—Manning: The Eternal Priesthood—Gibbons: The Ambassador of Christ.

—Bruneau: Our Priesthood—The Roman Pontifical. . . .

—Lives of Saints and of holy Priests.

## EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

HAS my peace of mind been disturbed, since my last Retreat, about any one of my confessions, as to integrity, sincerity, or contrition?—Have I been negligent in regard to confession, postponing it without sufficient reasons?

### I. DUTIES TO GOD

HAVE I entertained or too weakly resisted doubts in matters of faith?—Have I read pernicious or dangerous books, without necessity and without permission?

Have I sinned against Hope by lack of confidence in God's mercy or providence, by discouragement or presumption?

Have I sinned against Charity towards God by preferring, in practice, any creature to God, or any temporal interests to God's interests, or again by neglecting to make acts of love of God, at least from time to time?

Have I spoken, without sufficient reverence, of God, or of the Saints, or of holy things, or of persons consecrated to the Lord?

Have I read the Divine Office entirely, rubrically, reverently, without haste, "*pie, attente, ac devote*"? Do I postpone it to late hours when it becomes a burden and cannot easily be made a fruitful prayer?

Have I neglected to say Mass, on week days, for purely selfish motives? Did I ever offer the Holy Sacrifice in a doubtful state of conscience? Do I perform this sacred function with devotion and reverence, carefully observing the rubrics of the Missal and the directions of the Ordo, reading the liturgical text distinctly and without precipitation? Do I neglect my Thanksgiving after Mass?

Do I make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, every day?

Do I give enough attention to the care of my church, of the altar and tabernacle, of the sacred vessels and linen, of the vestments and all the objects used in divine worship?

## II. Duties to my Neighbor

HAVE I been wanting in obedience and respect to my ecclesiastical superiors? Have I willingly given them the cooperation they have a right to expect from me?

Did I ever injure their reputation or their work by criticism or inconsiderate remarks?

Have I sinned against my neighbor by anger, unreasonable quarrels or disputes, hatred, envy, jealousy, contempt, resentment and desire of revenge, lack of kindness and consideration, unwillingness to forgive injuries or to make up for those I have inflicted?

Have I injured any one's reputation by slander, detraction, rash judgment, suspicion . . . ?

Have I scandalized my neighbor by words or deeds, and neglected to warn or correct those under my care?

Have I paid my debts fully and without unnecessary delay? Have I injured, in any way, the temporal interests of others, or been careless in the management of Church property?

Have I neglected to assist the poor according to my means? Have I been kind and affable to all those who have sought help or advice from me?

Have I been negligent in visiting the sick and giving them the spiritual assistance and consolation which their condition requires; in preaching regularly and with sufficient preparation; in instructing children and watching over them; in making sure that all the children in my parish are baptized without delay, and in preparing adults for a worthy reception of this Sacrament; in securing the grace and blessing of the Sacrament of Confirmation for all my parishioners?

Have I showed myself sufficiently obliging in making preliminary arrangements for marriages? Have

I been zealous enough in preparing the parties to receive this Sacrament validly and worthily? Have I observed the canonical laws concerning impediments, dispensations, and jurisdiction? Have I tried to revalidate invalid marriages, and to regularize illicit unions?

Have I heard confessions punctually at the appointed hours, and showed myself willing to hear penitents even at other times, when requested? Have I been kind, patient, and discreet with my penitents? Have I followed the principles of sound theology and of experienced confessors, in giving absolution and spiritual direction? Have I always preserved the dignity and reserve required of him who represents Christ in the Tribunal of Penance?

### III. Duties to Myself

Have I sinned against holy purity by thought, word, or deed? Have I read dangerous books or looked at immodest pictures? Have I been careful enough in avoiding occasions of temptations? Do I ordinarily neglect the practice of mortification and self-denial, without which virtue is impossible?

Have I yielded to temptations of pride or vain glory, especially in the use of my authority and in the discharge of my duties as God's minister? Have I sought or desired worldly honors or distinctions?

Have I always been temperate in the use of food and drink?

Have I immoderately desired or too eagerly sought the possession of earthly goods? Have I spent money too freely for my own pleasure and comfort?

Have I wasted time in idleness, in light reading, in frequent or unduly prolonged games and recreations, in occupations foreign to my work as a priest? Have I been slothful in rising?

Have I sinned against truth?

Do I endeavor to preserve and develop the spirit of true piety by a daily practice of some of the principal devotions authorized and recommended by the Church?

What are the faults against which I must particularly guard, after this Retreat? What means should I take to avoid them?

*Resolutions.*

## ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION

—Read the meditation on the Ordination to the Holy Priesthood.

—Offer the Holy Sacrifice with special reverence, attention, and devotion, remembering and trying to revive your dispositions on the day of your First Mass. Make a fervent and longer Thanksgiving.

—Thank God for having directed you to the Holy Priesthood and enabled you to reach the sacred goal.

—Ask forgiveness for all the sins you have committed since the day of your ordination, especially for such as may be more directly opposed to the holiness of your state, and for your negligence or lack of zeal in discharging your priestly duties.

—Offer yourself entirely to Our Lord, through the hands of His Blessed Mother, and promise that you will spend this new year of your Priesthood in loving Him sincerely and serving Him generously. Renew the clerical consecration of your Tonsure.

—Pray for all those who have been instrumental in directing you towards the Holy Priesthood, and in particular for those who have helped you to prepare worthily for the day of your ordination and for the duties of the sacred ministry.

—Read the Divine Office with special care and devotion. Make a fervent Visit to the Blessed Sacrament.

—Apply yourself to perform your actions and discharge your duties with truly supernatural motives. Begin this new year of your Priesthood in such a way as to draw God's blessing upon you and your work.

*"Admoneo te ut resuscites gratiam Dei, quae est in te per impositionem manuum mearum."*

*II Tim. 1-6.*

### ORATIO

Resuscita in nobis, Domine, gratiam salutarem, quam per manuum impositionem nobis largiri dignatus es; ut quos tibi ministros consecrasti, fideles dispensatores inveniamur. Deus, qui summus sacerdos et hostia, tuo corpore et sanguine reficis ministros, quos tibi consecrasti; concede, quæsumus, ut tui sacerdotii consortes digne ambulemus vocatione qua vocati sumus, et plebem tuam pascere studeamus verbo et exemplo. Qui vivis, etc. . . .

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